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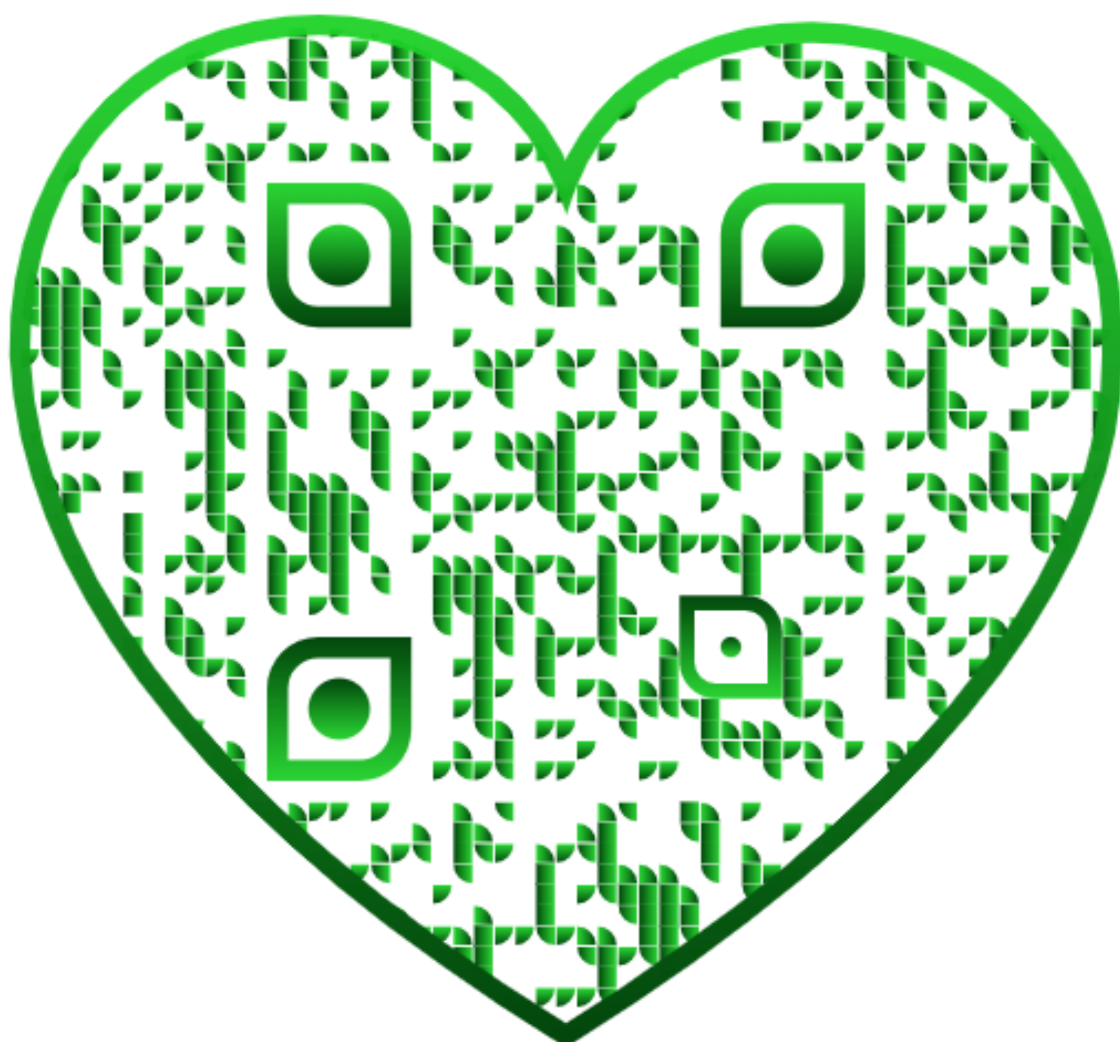
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1. Fashion Box C canvas 2. Rayas Vase 3. Harry Sofa & Leola Coffee Table 4. Leola Coffee Table 5. Leola Dining Table 6. Barlow Cushion 7. Sardinia Rug 8. Rae Cake Stand 9. Harry Modular Sofa 10. Dalton Cushion 11. Leola Side Table 12. Olson Bowl 13. Leola Buffet 14. Moreno Chair 15. Sabi Stripe Dish.



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If you've noticed a movement towards 'degrowth' and a more minimalist lifestyle, you're not alone. The elemental palette from Dulux Colour Forecast 2026 draws inspiration from a focus on living with less and encourages us to edit our spaces to include only furniture and decor that bring joy. Furniture should be solid, well-crafted and minimalist, with longevity and repairability a key feature. Elemental spaces also support the shift towards rewarding offline activities and hobbies, as people seek meaning beyond materialistic pursuits.

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Top 50 Rooms Issue

OCTOBER

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interiors celebrating the
best of Australian design

Lucinda Kimpton layered sumptuous patterns, prints and textures in this charming scheme. Artwork by Lori Pensini. Banquette in Carolina Irving 'Palmetto' linen in Jungle, Elliott Clarke. 'Wykeham' wall light in Domus. Textiles fabric shades. Dining chairs, Lincoln Brooks.

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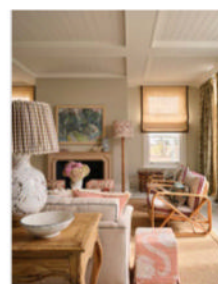
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Custom upholstery by Kimpton Interiors in fabrics by Altamira Basics, Brunschwig & Fils, Carolina Irving, Manuel Canovas, Fermoie, Soane and Tigger Hall Design. For more views of this home see pages 81, 91, 107, 118 and 121.



On our cover
Kimpton Interiors. Photo by Lisa Cohen. Styling by Madeline McFarlane. Artwork by Alan Warren. Our subscribers will have received a special edition cover, presented by Luxaflex.



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It's a pleasure to join you at *House & Garden* magazine.

And my appointment as editor comes at an exciting time, with this issue dedicated to our annual Top 50 Rooms awards - a celebration of Australia's best design talent.

For longtime readers of home magazines, you might have seen my name and perhaps my face pop up over the past decade or so, when I edited *Belle* or was among the formidable editorial teams at *Home Beautiful* and *Better Homes and Gardens*.

There's a lovely sense of familiarity stepping into this role after Tanya Buchanan, who I've worked alongside in the past. Tanya has guided *House & Garden* with such style since 2019 and is now editor-in-chief of *Belle* and *Country Style*. We remain very much in the same 'neighbourhood' at Are Media's famed 54 Park Street Sydney headquarters, continuing the strong editorial tradition she helped establish.

I'm sure you'll join me in extending a heartfelt thank you to Tanya for her inimitable eye and boundless energy in directing *H&G* over the years. It feels as though she's handed me the keys to a very special pad - beautifully preened and polished - and I look forward to continuing to build on her legacy for this great Australian masthead.

Among my first tasks here was joining Tanya and the panel to judge this year's Top 50 Rooms, presented by Winnings. Astonishingly, we received around 400 submissions, and from page 71, you'll find what the jury *eventually* agreed were the best kitchens, bathrooms, bedrooms, laundries and indoor-outdoor spaces - all layered with ideas to inspire. Gongs were also given to masters of colour, soft furnishings and materials, along with this year's Rising Star and Room of the Year.

I won't drop any spoilers here - flick through and enjoy the big reveal. But of course, we'd love to hear from you. Cast a vote in the Readers' Choice Award, sponsored by Bird in Hand, and let us know which room most captured your heart, via page 129.

Elsewhere this issue, Sophie Wilson sets the scene in *Stylescape* (page 44), Melissa Penfold and Isabella Walker-Smith round up the garden suppliers worth having on speed dial (page 54) and Amanda Cordony's canapé menu (page 61) offers new ways to entertain at home. I'm particularly loving the simplicity of the Japanese-style mignonette elevating fresh oysters to elite entrée status - it takes a lot to sway me from a good old squeeze of lemon, but I'm sold on this easy-to-prepare upgrade.

Among the heavenly abodes featured, from page 131, you'll glimpse a spectrum of styles proving there's no single recipe for living beautifully. I've followed ceramicist Ebony Russell on Instagram for some time, so being invited into her family home (page 132) and seeing how an artist lives with their own work - and that of others - is a real joy. Then, from page 187, take a wander through a garden set in a stunning shore-hugging spot in coastal NSW, where hardy native plants thrive.

Our final word in *The Creative Type*, page 194, is with artist Tan Arlidge, whose determination to master colour - something she admits doesn't come naturally - offers a reminder that creativity often lies in the act of challenge. With colour making such a splash throughout this issue, her candour makes a reassuring end note.

GAVIN KIRK, EDITOR

WISH LIST



1 Flack Studio:
Interiors **book**,
(Rizzoli), \$180,
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2 Louise Roe
'Spina' **armchair**,
from \$3435,
District.



3 'Phoebe'
vase, \$618,
Fleur Studios.



4 Nuit Rouge
45° fragrance,
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With thanks to Tanya Buchanan

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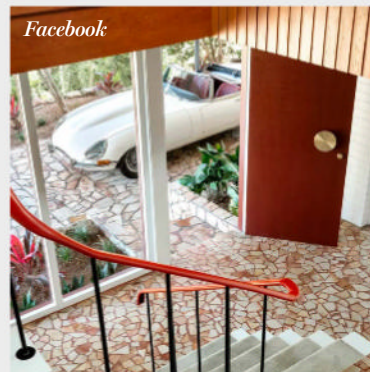
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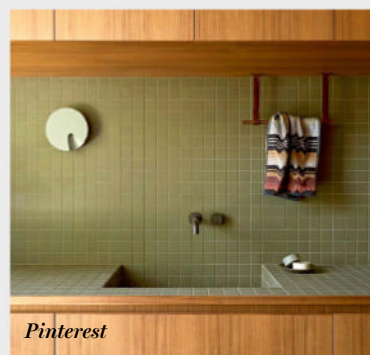
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Our posts that made your month.

AFL star Trent Cotchin's family home followers' attention on Instagram. On Facebook, this Mid-century home was a huge hit. Meanwhile on Pinterest, the green laundry in a home decorated by Frank & Boyd Design received a lot of love.

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Highlights from each issue plus links to tours of our favourite homes.

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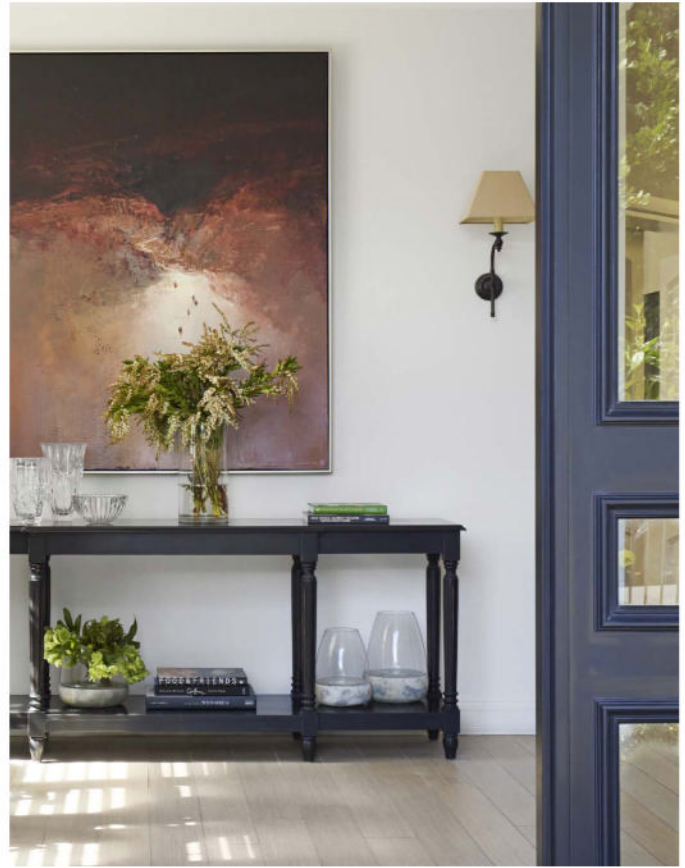
ON THE HORIZON

This Sydney clifftop home, set against wide ocean views, has nurtured everyday adventures for a party of four.

STORY *Eliza O'Hare* | STYLING *Sophie Wilson* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Prue Ruscoe*



Siobhán drove away from this house on first inspection – she found it cold and hard. But something drew her back and with time, work and warmth, she helped craft the home she, her husband and their two daughters have come to love. There's so much space for everyone, including Labrador Macey, to spread out and enjoy on this expansive Sydney coastal property. Artwork by Mel Brigg.



Every room has a story in this family home, where cooking, comfort and afternoon naps inspired the design. When Siobhán Kennelly and husband Jamie started out looking for a bigger backyard for their two daughters, they knew they wanted to stay in the current neighbourhood their whole family loved. The children, then aged 10 and 13, were already deeply enmeshed in local schools and friendships, so the house hunt had to start locally.

More than just a bigger backyard, they wanted to find a way to indulge each of their domestic passions within their home. Siobhán is a dedicated reader whose downtime from her role as a lawyer calls for a soft, quiet space for reading. Jamie is a mad golfer who likes to keep his putting skills sharp. And the girls, well, if it isn't netball, basketball, swimming or finding nooks of their own to curl up and read in – it's baking. Family bake-offs are what counts for a fun time around here, and even Jamie's rosemary sausage rolls give him reason to be prepping

in the kitchen with his girls. But to accommodate all of these varied passions in one property was no easy task.

The first time Siobhán saw this house 15 years ago, it was absolutely not that unicorn property she'd hoped for. "Oh, it was ugly!" she laughs. "The finishes were awful and I could feel it was a hard house." But something pulled her back for another proper look.

It was only a 10-year-old build, but it already felt old and cold. The rigid surfaces – shiny white, oversized tiled floors and a terracotta-tiled staircase – stopped Siobhán in her tracks. "It had a great big void through the centre, a lot of wrought iron and bright green carpet," she recalls. But her gut told her it could work. "As I walked up to this top level and looked down, I thought, 'I could do something with this'. I loved the space, it was just so big."

And so she did. They kept the existing footprint mostly intact, aside from the sensible tweaking of the tandem garage to a side-by-side, which also moved the entrance and staircase. But the main task was to soften the home with warmer materials and a welcoming feel. ►

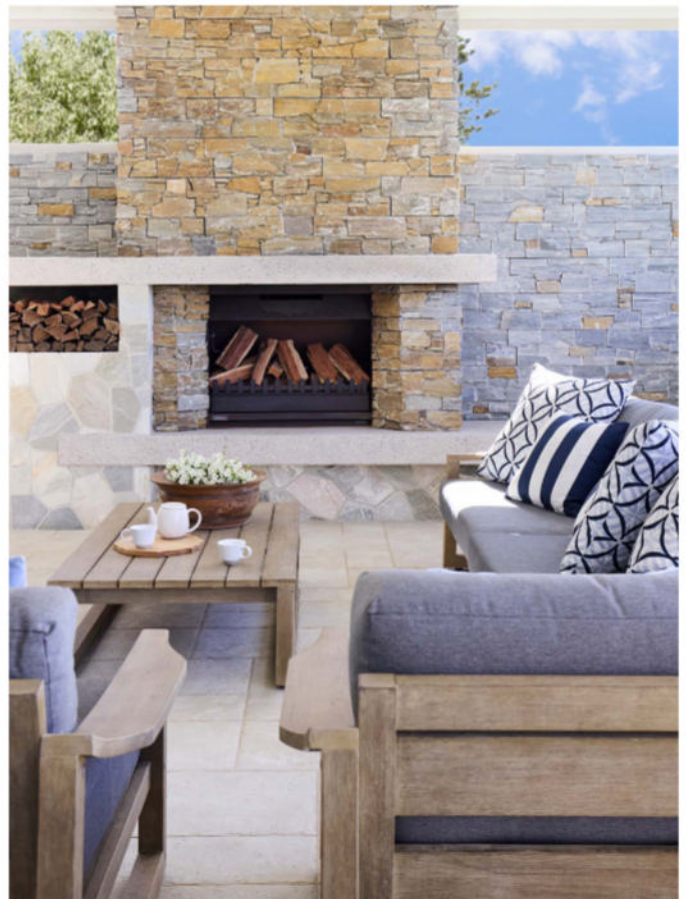
ENTRY A classic exterior scheme sets the tone for the family to relax and unwind as they arrive. Artwork by Mel Brigg. **LIVING** *Opposite* Set to a backdrop of pristine ocean views, an inviting living area is layered with linen, timber and stone – the varied textures add depth and interest to this calming space. Cushions, Walter G. Australian House & Garden 'Hinterland' candle in Cedar & Eucalyptus, Myer.





“I absolutely love the moonrises.
When there’s a full moon shining
on the water, it’s unreal.” SIOBHÁN, OWNER

KITCHEN Siobhán opted for timber-look tiles for the ground-level floors. She loves the look of timber, but the tiles offer durability suited to a high-traffic family area. Clay bowl by Paola Paronetto, and Eforma bar stool, both Fanuli. Scalloped vase, GlobeWest. **OPPOSITE** Chandeliers add a touch of glamour in the formal dining room. In the bedroom, grasscloth wallpaper and notes of powder blue tie into the stunning coastal views. The outdoor wood-fired entertaining setting is a favourite spot for the family to gather. Serving board, IvyAliceVintage.





“Whale watching from every level of the house is very special.”

SIOBHÁN, OWNER

Being so close to the ocean, establishing a garden was going to be tricky. But seeing the neighbours' tennis courts showed how the backyard could start taking on its own luxury sport-and-rec vibe. So the existing pool was covered with a full-sized tennis court, the ball machine was ordered, and netball and basketball hoops were erected. A new saltwater pool was introduced, which offered the opportunity to work in some strong sustainable benefits, too. Rainwater runoff is now stored under the court and repurposed for the gardens and pool, and installing 35 solar panels and stored batteries in the garage mean this house is generally running off-grid.

With the remaining space, Jamie added in a five-hole putting green with adorable flagsticks that might convince Siobhán to return to her teenage Irish golfing roots, but the family magnet is the outdoor wood-burning fireplace, surrounded by daybeds. The outdoor fire has made such a huge impact, that the kitchen was fitted with a gas-burning fireplace as well, “I think the fireplace is a game-changer. It’s one of the highlights of winter.”

With every house there’s an unexpected element of joy and in this home, being able to whale watch from every level is a real treat. Siobhán is delighted by the evening ocean aspect. “What I’ve grown to absolutely love about this house are the moonrises. When there’s a full moon shining on the water, it’s unreal.” Much like this home.

This east-facing cliff-top home in Sydney’s Dover Heights has been the generous home it needed to be. Now, with two grown girls, Siobhán and Jamie are planning their next steps: a downsize to a new neighbourhood or perhaps an overseas adventure. The six-bedroom, five-bathroom house is ready for the next family to enjoy.

H&G

For enquiries, contact Ray White Double Bay.

OUTDOORS *Top* The family installed a new saltwater pool. *Left* The tennis court enjoys unbroken views of the Pacific Ocean. Rainwater runoff from the house is fed into storage under the court and used to irrigate the gardens and filtered for the new pool. With 35 solar roof panels, the sun-drenched site takes full advantage of its location – the house able to run off-grid and is well-equipped for electric car charging.



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Come together for a meal
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'CASA' BLUE OUTDOOR CUSHION (45 X 45CM) \$29.95; 'PALM PERFECTION' OUTDOOR CUSHION (45 X 45CM) \$34.95;
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Each Harvey Norman® store is operated by an independent franchisee. Furniture prices displayed are valid in state capital metropolitan areas only (excluding Northern Territory and Tasmania). Prices in country areas will be higher due to additional freight charges. Accessories shown are not included. Promotion ends 31/10/2025.

Decorating

ELEGANT IDEAS AND EXPERT ADVICE FOR YOUR HOME

Styling by Sophie Wilson. Photograph by Alana Landsberry.

Curtains, Luxaflex. See page 48 for more.
Australian House & Garden tumblers and
dinner set, all Myer. Board, IvyAliceVintage.
Vessel by Katarina Wells. Rug, Freedom.

Stylescape

WITH SOPHIE WILSON



Composing an elegant dining room which feels inviting can take more than simply placing a table and a few chairs. The perfect pendant light for ambience, stylish servingware and interesting vases can create layers for overall appeal. From chic tabletop treasures made for lingering dinner parties to a timeless room set-up inspired by a designer showroom display, *H&G's* stylist serves up a feast of fresh design this spring.

TOP FIVE *dining chairs*



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1 'Onasis' dining chair in Linen, \$329, Domayne. 2 'Corbelia' fabric dining armchair, \$479, Freedom. 3 'Nobu' dining chair in Natural, \$399, Harvey Norman. 4 'Remi' dining chair, \$694, MCM House. 5 Pinch 'Avery' dining chair, \$2290, Winnings. PORTRAIT 'Lituus' vase, Georg Jensen. 'Tombo' dining chairs, Fanuli. Harlequin 'Melograno' wallpaper in Forest/First Light used as background, Wallpaperdirect.



WORTHY INVESTMENT

It's no easy task hunting for a dream dining table that's flexible, durable and made in a style you'll love for years to come. There are some great extendable designs available, which offer space to grow or accommodate many a lively gathering. I love this 'Carmel' extension dining table for its curved corners and solid design. The Blonde Natural finish pairs well with many classic, coastal or contemporary looks; \$6395, Coco Republic.



Versatile vessel

Style sophisticated items on your table which can double as vase or vessel. The 'Delphine' jug, \$280, Merci Maison.



SCULPTURAL BASE

Hand-screeding provides a unique textured finish to the 'Bullet' round dining table, \$4200, Casa Blanco.



PRETTY PENDANT

A detailed pendant light – such as this bamboo pleated designer shade – hung above your dining setting will offer ambient light and visual interest to your room. Gubi 'Tynell' 1972 pendant light, \$1999, Cult.



Silver service

I love to keep my overall room scheme neutral and classic, then I add interesting details via everyday items such as this Sabre Paris bamboo five-piece cutlery set, \$235, Emporean.

LAYERED PLACE SETTINGS

Create a VISUAL FEAST before you serve a *culinary* one by layering linens, napery and PRETTY PLATES in different sizes and with varied intricate details. 'Heirloom' placemat in Emerald Green with Ivory Embroidery, \$89/set of four.



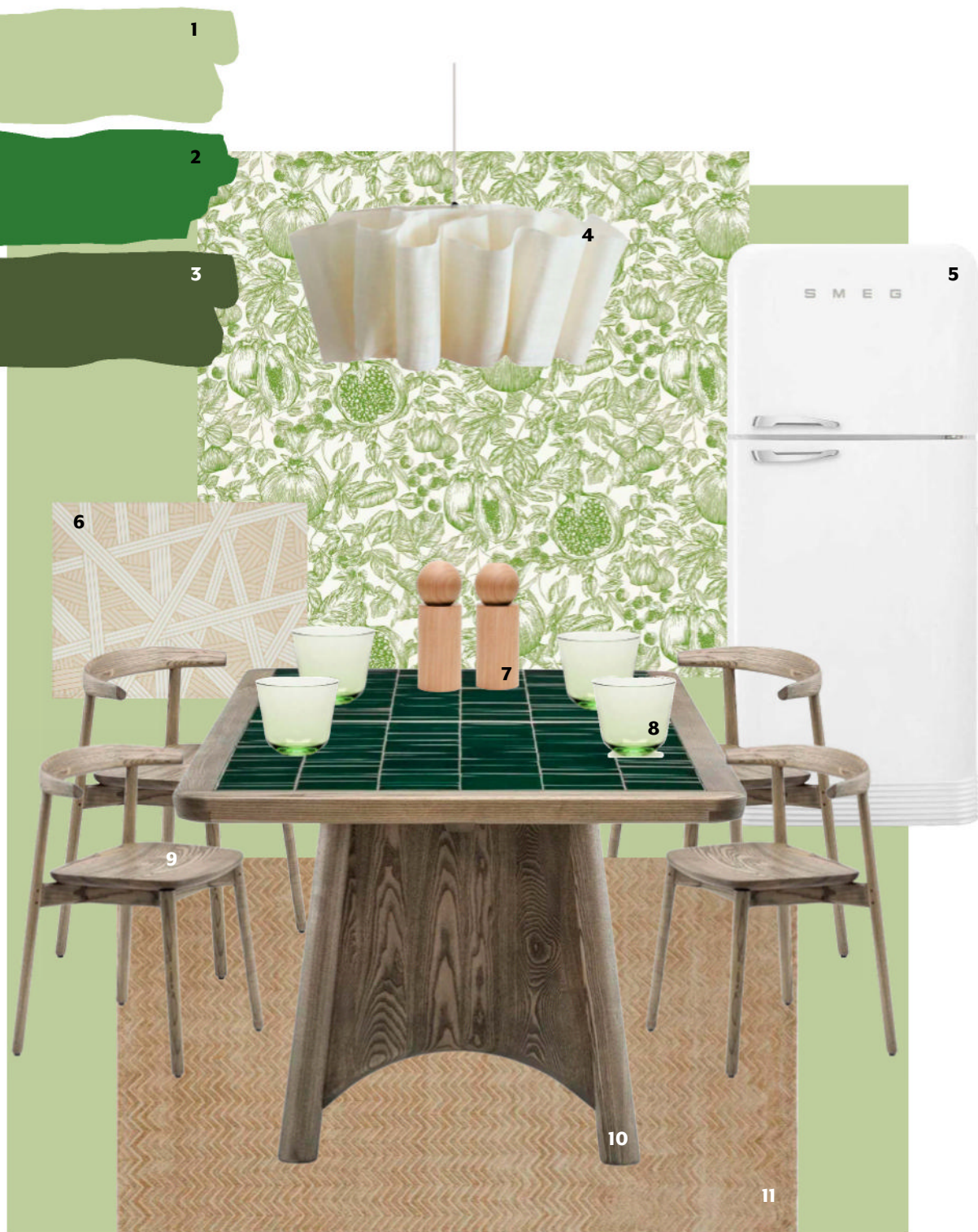
VISION BOARD

Even for me, stepping into a showroom can feel overwhelming – and I'm in and out of stores most days. To separate inspiration from all the visual 'noise', when I spot a hero piece I love, I take a quick snap on my phone, then build a moodboard of complementary pieces, drawing on the main style, finish or colour to create a cohesive, shoppable scheme.



This De La Espada table in the Winnings showroom caught my eye, with its ash timber base and gloss forest green tiled top. I used this as a foundation to build this month's 'The Room' scheme from.

Winnings photography by Adam Amin. Producers: The Local Production.



The Room

1 Dulux Honeydew. 2 Dulux Nereus. 3 Dulux Shallot Leaf. 4 Pinch 'Anders' large **pendant light**, \$11,970; 5 Smeg 'Fab 50's Style' 524L **refrigerator** in White, \$4990; 6 Missoni 'Marea Nastri 100' **placemat and napkin set**, \$620; 7 Case Furniture 'Orb' **grinder** in Beech, \$165 each; 8 Serax 'Grace' **tumblers**, \$155/set of four; 9 De La Espada 'Ando' **chairs** in Ash, \$2180 each, and 10 'Twenty-Five' medium **dining table** in Ash and Green Tiles, \$18,860; 11 Missoni 'Bucarest' **rug** (200x300cm), \$8285, all available at Winnings. Harlequin 'Melograno' **wallpaper** in Forest/First Light, Wallpaperdirect. **H&G**

H&G DECORATING

Curtains and privacy screen, all Luxaflex. Australian House & Garden napkins and dinner set, all Myer. Vessel by Katarina Wells, Curatorial+Co. Floor lamp, Few and Far. Table and chairs, all Lounge Lovers. Rug, Freedom.





Curtain call

HOW TO PICK THE PERFECT WINDOW TREATMENTS TO SUIT YOUR HOME, ACCORDING TO THE EXPERTS.

STORY *Bethan Lacoba* | STYLING *Sophie Wilson*
PHOTOGRAPHY *Alana Landsberry*

From curtains and blinds to shutters and shades, there are so many window and doorway treatment styles to consider when decorating your home. “Layering different treatments can completely transform a room by adding depth, dimension and versatility,” says Stephanie Lee, brand manager at Luxaflex Window Fashions. But while it’s exciting to think about aesthetics, it’s equally important to consider the purpose of a room. When do you spend the most time in this space? What direction do the windows and doors face? For instance, west-facing rooms could be flooded with hot afternoon sun, calling for UV-filtering options.

“You might layer sheers with blackout curtains in a bedroom for light control and privacy or opt for blinds for their functional value, such as an energy-efficient blind like the Luxaflex Duette honeycomb Shades, paired with a soft sheer,” she says.

It’s essential to consider screening options to keep pesky insects out, especially going into entertaining season. Interior designer Sally Wilkins says, “Screens are essential in Australian homes. They allow us to keep doors open and enjoy natural airflow.”

Ticking all the functional boxes doesn’t have to mean overlooking style: natural linens will give an organic feel to a room, filter light and provide privacy. “London blinds are a beautiful option in spaces where a full-height curtain isn’t practical,” says Georgina Wilson, principal architect at Georgina Wilson Associates. “They work particularly well over windows with furniture or cabinetry beneath where a curtain would feel bulky or awkward.”

Whatever your considerations, it’s always an excellent idea to consult a window-furnishing supplier, interior designer or architect for advice on all the best selections for your home. Luckily, we’ve gathered all three experts here to share their top tips. ►



London blind in
Zion Raw, and curtains,
all Luxaflex. Artwork
by Mitchell Cheesman,
Curatorial+Co. Chair,
James Lane. Coffee table,
OZ Design. Rug, Freedom.

MIXING WINDOW FURNISHINGS

“I often use both a curtain and Roman blind within one space – this offers versatility and visual interest. I enjoy playing with different options. I select the drape to reflect the level of formality of the room and the type of fabric – sheer linen drapes beautifully in a soft-fold Roman blind.” *Sally Wilkins, designer*

FOR TIMELESS ELEGANCE

“London blinds (or soft Roman blinds) are making a comeback. The relaxed folds strike a balance between structure and ease. To integrate them successfully, consider the fabric: light linens, like these here in Zion Raw from Luxaflex, feel soft and casual.”

Stephanie Lee, Luxaflex Window Fashions

London blind in Zion Raw, Luxaflex. Pendant light, Beacon Lighting. Art by André de Vanny, Emma Lindegaard, Katarina Wells, all Curatorial+Co. Australian House & Garden candle, Myer. Flooring, Woodcut.



SCREEN TIME “A screen and curtain combination allows both practicality and softness,” says Stephanie from Luxaflex. “This approach is ideal for open-plan living areas, multipurpose rooms and even indoor/outdoor spaces. A screen provides privacy, airflow and insect protection, while the curtain adds warmth, insulation and a decorative layer.”

COMBINING CURTAINS AND SCREENS

“Consider sightlines: screens will always create a degree of visual obstruction, so I avoid them on hero windows or doors where the view is the star. Instead, they’re far better suited to less focal openings where performance matters more than the vista.” *Georgina Wilson, architect*



Curtain and privacy/insect screen, both Luxaflex. Artwork by William Versace, and vessel by Katarina Wells, both Curatorial+Co. Australian House & Garden ‘Desert Flower’ tumblers, Myer. ‘Zulu’ armchairs, Domayne. Pavers, Amber.

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MELISSA PENFOLD & ISABELLA WALKER-SMITH

GARDEN SUPPLIERS

PLANTS ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN ANY GARDEN. THIS MONTH'S
LITTLE BLACK BOOK SHARES OUR EXPERTS' LIST OF GO-TO NURSERIES.

PHOTOGRAPHY *Alana Landsberry*

Great gardens are built on solid foundations, so it's important not to skimp on the preparations. Whether it's pavers or pebbles, spectacular succulents or specimen trees, Australia has it all. Discover where the experts head for their plant selections with our definitive list of suppliers. You'll discover institutions and information that has been carefully stashed away by the trade and the country's tastemakers. The nurseries and garden centres we've listed are brilliant examples of their kind. And remember, connecting your house to a private garden, balcony or outdoor space will bring you that most prized of human experiences – enjoyment.

ALPINE NURSERIES, NSW

An excellent range of large trees, both evergreen and deciduous – from conifers to palm trees. The landscape designer's choice for large trees that make a garden feel as if it has always been there. Top landscaper Wyer & Co highly recommends Alpine for great hedging, ornamental grasses and perennials. Knowledgeable and helpful staff too. alpinenurseries.com.au

ANTIQUE PERENNIALS, VIC

A wholesale and retail nursery that supplies amazing plants to leading Australian plant retailers, landscapers and professional gardeners. Owners Matt Reed and Michael Morant have 50 years' combined experience in growing plants for

Australian gardens. Specialising in rare and unusual perennials, including shade-loving woodlanders, bulbs, prairie plants and other hardy perennials. Many plants are recent introductions and exclusive. antiqueperennials.com

ARCHITECTURAL BY NATURE, QLD

Anthony Wyer of Wyer & Co gets rare, striking, architectural foliage and xeriscape plants here. Situated a five-minute drive from the Gold Coast airport, this is where top architects and designers go for rare specimens for exclusive projects. The high-quality plants, grown in its Northern NSW nursery, are suitable for frost, drought, wind and coastal conditions. architecturalbynature.com.au

AUSTRALIAN NATIVE LANDSCAPES, NSW

Sydney's largest landscape-product suppliers is also a big recycler of composted materials – this is where a lot of clean-up week prunings go. A huge supplier of pebbles, stones, sand, soils and boulders – real and artificial – as well as plants, great and small. Expert horticultural advice on hand too. anlscapes.com.au

BAY STREET GARDENS, NSW

One of Sydney's chicest plant nurseries with an impressive list of clients including

top designers such as Lynda Kerry and food blogger Stephanie Conley-Buhre. Owner Scott Williams has designed more than 6000 gardens in the 37 years since he founded the business and is the name behind plant wholesaler Plant Biz. His production nursery has more than 40,000 in-ground plants, so you know you're getting high-quality specimens, topiary, hedging and screening. His plants grace the best gardens dotted around Sydney Harbour. baystreetgardens.com.au

BOTANICAH, VIC

A 350sqm warehouse in Prahran, chockful with cascading figs, ferns and climbing vines. From air plants and variegated calathea to Japanese maples and impressive fan palms, most of the plants here will successfully grow indoors or on balconies. Great pots of all kinds, from terracotta and marble to tree stumps, to keep your plants sturdy and handsome. botanica.com.au

BUNNINGS, NSW

If your garden outlook is an urban mishmash and you crave nature's finest, the huge outlet at Mascot offers a fully-fledged garden centre that is a good source of plants, plus pebbles, mulch and much more. Set your taste meter to 'high' because the chain caters for everybody. bunnings.com.au ►



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1 Grasses and perennials, Antique Perennials. **2 'Air' garden pots**, from \$165, Garden Life. **3 Acanthus syriacus low-growing plant**, \$16, Lambley Nursery. **4 Scala travertine pavers**, Eco Outdoor. **5 A field of lavender**, Swane's Nurseries.

OPPOSITE Melissa and Isabella pictured at Bay Street Gardens in Double Bay, NSW.



Ladysmith Park Perennials plant nursery in Alfredtown, NSW.

EASYGREEN PLANT CO, NSW

After years in the business, landscaper Gus Munro has branched out on his own. His quality plants grace gardens designed by William Danga, Robert Plumb, Paul Bangay, Michael Bligh and third-generation landscaper Sophie Bligh who highly recommends Easygreen's supply of Japanese elms and Snow pear and Bradford pear trees, which she prefers to Manchurian pears. [0432 690525](tel:0432690525)

EDEN GARDENS, NSW

Slick, vast and upmarket garden centre, good for so much more than plants and pots. Set on 2.5 acres, this site features

sizeable indoor and outdoor retail areas offering a big well-edited selection of water features, garden sculptures, outdoor furniture, books and homewares. Helpful staff and a cafe, so you can make a day of it. edengardens.com.au

FROGMORE GARDENS, VIC

One of the best for perennials, seeds and bulbs. A vast choice of daffodils, tulips, dahlias, chrysanthemums, gladioli, lilac, lily of the valley, peonies, hydrangeas, clematis and all kinds of shrubs and vines. Its easy-to-navigate website is indexed by colour and season. You won't go wrong here. frogmoregardens.com.au

GARDEN LIFE, NSW

One of Sydney's chicest plant nurseries has an impressive list of clients, from film director Baz Luhrmann to top designer Iain Halliday. Plus the best cloud trees and garden pots. Go for all sizes of great own-brand 'Contour' planters in Terracotta, chimney pots in new mocha colour and hand-thrown ribbed terracotta planters, handmade in Morocco. gardenlife.com.au

GUBBINS, NSW

A one-stop hardware in the Southern Highlands for all things garden: from plants of all kinds to topsoil, mulch, pebbles, gravel, pots, pavers, garden edges, retaining walls, stone cladding and great garden furniture that resembles the designer stuff. homehardware.com.au

HANCOCKS DAFFODILS, VIC

A-list landscapers go nuts over this place. They all come for the best varieties of bulbs from the daffodil family (narcissus); along with a few fragrant antique flowers we can never resist. daffodilbulbs.com.au

HARVEST SEEDS, NSW

A registered seed merchant and nursery that stocks 700 species of native plants, with a goal to return our bushland to its roots. It's the place to find species you'd see on bushwalks in Sydney and its surrounds or on your plate in some restaurants. You'll find rows of native species, with a vegetation map that divides Sydney's suburbs into a series of 'plant communities', so you can see what species might thrive in your garden. harvestseeds-nativeplants.com.au

HONEYSUCKLE GARDEN, NSW

An essential stop for those short on time. Grab a white hydrangea, cyclamen or phalaenopsis orchid (the Hermès scarf

“Choose plants according to the size and setting of your garden, and the amount of maintenance you can put in.”

of interiors). It has a strong line of its own topiary at very competitive prices. There are also planters, many of which are usually discounted. Knowledgeable and helpful staff too. honeysucklelegarden.com.au

LADYSMITH PARK PERENNIALS, NSW

A gem of a rural perennial plant nursery for wildlife-friendly gardens, sustainable, native plants and wild grasses that thrive in our climate. Ladysmith celebrates the popular new movement of embracing wild and naturalistic gardens that harmonise with the environment. Specialising in boutique landscape architecture services and large quantity plant orders in tune with a more natural style of landscaping and living. ladysmithparkperennials.com.au

LAMBLEY NURSERY, VIC

The gardener's source for lamb's ear, which was once part of the Byzantine empire – that undeniably strong-growing perennial groundcover that stays low and dense, is easy to care for and collaborates with a wide variety of different garden styles and colour palettes. Great for softening walkways, filling gaps and adding a casual formality to gardens. lambley.com.au

MAPPINS, QLD

Something of a Brisbane institution. The plant-curious are welcomed to the Montague Road shop's courtyard by an eclectic range of cacti and the sound of gurgling ponds. A lush jungle brimming with tall philodendrons, tumbling peperomias, carnivorous fly-catchers and humid terrariums. Owner Darryl Mappin earned his stripes as a 'water gardener', and fish and water plants are a specialty here. darrylmappin.com

Stones, pebbles and pavers

Eco Outdoor The Gucci of outdoor spaces. Limestones, crazy paving, cobblestones, sandstone, travertine, split stone, terrazzo, bluestone and granite in a range of finishes. Top landscaper designers Myles Baldwin, Anthony Wyer of Wyer & Co, Luigi Rosselli, Peter Stutchbury, and Thomas Hamel work closely with Eco. eco-outdoor.com

GatherCo This Australian company supplies high-quality unusual stones sourced in Greece, Cyprus, Spain, France, Belgium, Italy, Turkey, India, Egypt, Oman, United Arab Emirates, South Africa, Vietnam and China. The place to source split stone, finger tiles, organic tumbled steppers, bush hammered travertine, honed mosaics, aged, distressed and sand blasted limestone, antique, reclaimed and calibrated cobblestones, tumbled split Filetti of natural stone and much more. gatherco.com.au

Highlands Sand & Soil

Third-generation landscaper Sophie Bligh raves about the Jugiong pebbles (14mm) here. "A client, who is a designer, put me onto the brownish round pebbles with black and white stone interspersed that you can use for driveways, paths and gardens." She also recommends the crushed decomposed granite in gold. highlandssandandsoil.com.au

MESARA TREE FARM, NSW

Tree heaven, the place to come if you want quality exotic or semi-advanced trees including maples, plane trees, alders, ornamental cherries, Chinese elms, dogwoods, claret ash, crabapples, hornbeams, magnolias, Manchurian pears and oaks. Take your pick. (02) 4887 1284

SWANE'S NURSERIES, NSW

The old family business, established in 1919, is one of the biggest nurseries in the country, with wholesale and retail areas. Famous for its roses, which are grown in a row of big, identical pitched-roof greenhouses, along with orchids and other ornamental blooms. Outside you'll find a full range of cacti and succulents, plenty of exotic shrubs and climbers from Asia, plus eucalypts and an array of other natives. Ask about the nursery's discount system. swanes.com

SYDNEY WILDFLOWER NURSERY, NSW

Many say this is Sydney's best native plant nursery – and owner Dave Rose is one of the most knowledgeable on all things involving native species and gardens. With a running catalogue of 1200 native flowers, trees, shrubs and grasses, this is the place to visit if you're looking to plant a hardy, well-adapted garden. Like many other good nurseries, Wildflower can help with the design and has consultants who do home visits. Regular workshops cover everything from pruning to collecting honey from native bees. sydneywildflowernursery.com.au

TESSELAAR FLOWERS

Many of our favourite flowering plants grow from bulbs rather than from ►

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1 'Palms' trowel, \$9, The Palms Sydney.
2 AS outdoor pots, from \$2150, Cosh Living.
3 Watering can in Heritage Green, \$44.98, Honeysuckle Garden. 4 Plant Runner plant food, \$15, Botanicah. 5 Contour pot in Terracotta, from \$65.

“Few activities are as satisfying as gardening. It’s so good for you.”

seeds and this is where serious gardeners and big name landscapers, such as Paul Bangay, source them. Everything from tulips, daffodils, peonies, dahlias and gladioli (corms). tesselaarflowers.com.au

THE DIGGERS CLUB

Choose the right vegetables for your kitchen garden (and climate) on its website. Learn how to opt for a combo of ornamentals and edibles, and how to layer with excellent tips and tricks. The Diggers Club stocks an amazing range of affordable garden tools and plants such as hard-to-find climbing hydrangeas. diggers.com.au

THE PALMS SYDNEY, NSW

This vibrant tropical nursery has a homewares store, restaurant, seasonal gardens, koi pond and tranquil water features. Choose from all kinds of palm trees with tall, slightly curving trunks festooned with topknots of bright green fronds. Endless palm species as well as cactus and succulents, flowering plants and fruit trees. thepalmssydney.com.au

THE POTTING SHED, NSW

Garden guru Maureen Gardner always has a good stock of on-trend plants (succulents, topiary, rosemary, herbs, foxglove, standard cumquats) and lovely old pots, English-style benches, obelisks, fire pits, arches. thepottingshedbowlral.com

TREES IMPACT, NSW

Leading Australian landscaper Wyer & Co swears by this highly specialised owner-operated tree grower, which is the golden standard for large stock of bigger trees. We’re talking 200-plus litre pots and trees noteworthy because of size, species, flower, bark, form or rarity. The focus is firmly on super-advanced and semi-mature landscape trees. Anthony Wyer recommends the selection of natives. treesimpact.com.au

URBAN NURSERIES, NSW

Anthony Wyer recommends the family-run business headed by Greg Knox, a driving force in the nursery and horticulture industry for more than 20 years. Greg enjoys being able to share his passion for unusual plants and garden design. Delivers to Newcastle, Central Coast, Southern Highlands and Blue Mountains. urbannurseries.com.au

VALLEY RANCH SUCCULENTS, NSW

Few nurseries in Sydney can claim third-generation ownership like Valley Ranch Succulents, which was established in the 1960s. Despite the name, this backyard operation stocks more than succulents and cacti. It’s also a destination for ferns and various natives, as well as olive trees and exotic fruit trees – pomegranate, cumquat – almost all of which are propagated on site. Visits to the nursery are by appointment only. valleyranchnursery.com.au



Pavers from GatherCo form an orderly path in a traditional garden.

WELBY GARDEN CENTRE, NSW

This gem of a nursery is the place to get a lifetime's supply of trees and garden supplies in one hit. It is renowned for its quality shrubs, roses, fruit trees, perennials, pines and great hedging plants. If you've got acreage, look no further. And trained staff are on hand to give horticultural advice. The focus is on cold-weather plants. welbygardencentre.com.au

MT WILLIAM ADVANCED TREE NURSERY, VIC

A huge range of deciduous and evergreen ornamental and native plants that are used everywhere from The University of Sydney, Canberra Airport, Australian Botanic Garden Mount Annan, Newington College and Westfield. advancedtrees.com.au

WINTER HILL, NSW

If you don't want to wait years for trees to grow and fancy big trees, some of which

are pruned into interesting shapes, come here. The 70-acre farm has more than 300 semi-mature and advanced specimen trees. There are cypress, beech, oak, plane, juniper, bay, laurel, maple as well as tulip and pear trees. Popular third-generation landscaper Sophie Bligh recommends its standard weeping silver pear, grafted on to a 1.8-meter trunk – ideal for shade, hedges and driveways. The landscaper's choice. An excellent annual sale too. winterhill.com.au

WOODBIDGE NURSERY

A mail-order nursery that ships nationwide. You'll find a great selection of perennials, grasses, edibles and more. New varieties are added regularly to the online catalogue. The informative website allows users to search with filters such as light requirement, height, drought resistance, frost tolerance and flowering time. woodbridgenursery.com.au **H&G**

Landscaper profile

Myles Baldwin

This is one of our favourite garden designers, who did the garden of one of the most striking Australian houses, which appears in Melissa's book, *Natural Living By Design* (Vendome Press, \$69). He works closely with Eco Outdoor to source the best stone floors and walls.

Baldwin likes to specify furniture from Tait, Fermob and Space. Cosh Living is where he sources his favourite Atelier Vierkant marvellously rustic modern pots for plants, trees and vines. Woodbridge Nurseries is his go-to for its great collection of perennials. mylesbaldwin.com



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pyrolux.com.au

Entertaining

STYLISH BUT SIMPLE CANAPÉS YOUR GUESTS WILL LOVE

*Oysters with
Japanese-style
mignonette*

Outset oyster shells, Amazon.
'Flocca' linen tablecloth,
Hale Mercantile Co.

H&G ENTERTAINING

Steel oval tray and steel goblets,
In the Roundhouse. 'Basix' linen
napkin and 'Flocca' linen tablecloth,
both Hale Mercantile Co.



*French onion grilled
comté bites*

Cocktail HOUR

*Crudités with
whipped beetroot labneh
& pomegranate*

Turn up the elegance at your next party with this
chic selection of canapés from The Cordony Kitchen.

RECIPES *Amanda Cordony* | STYLING *Sophie Wilson* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Alana Landsberry*



Indulgent *seafood morsels*
pair well with a *delicate*,
fresh and *light* white.

OYSTERS WITH JAPANESE-STYLE MIGNONETTE

Prep time: 10 minutes.

Cooking time: 1 minute.

Serves: 4.

2 tablespoons (40ml) rice wine vinegar
1 tablespoon (20ml) light soy sauce
1 teaspoon finely grated fresh ginger
1 tablespoon finely sliced green shallot
1 teaspoon sesame seeds
8 freshly shucked Pacific oysters
1 tablespoon finely chopped chives,
to serve

- 1** In a small bowl, combine vinegar, soy sauce, ginger and shallot. Mix well.
- 2** Place a small frying pan on medium heat and toast sesame seeds for 1 minute until golden brown. Place into a small bowl.
- 3** Place oysters onto a large platter or individual trays. Spoon a little of the mignonette over each oyster and sprinkle over sesame seeds and chives. Serve.

ENTERTAINING **H&G**

Wine glasses, Bohemia Crystal.
Outset oyster shells, Amazon.
Bird in Hand pinot grigio. 'Basix'
linen napkins and 'Flocca' linen
tablecloth, all Hale Mercantile Co.

*Oysters with
Japanese-style
mignonette*



FRENCH ONION GRILLED COMTÉ BITES

Prep time: 15 minutes.

Cooking time: 25 minutes.

Serves: 4.

50g salted butter
2 tablespoons (40ml) extra virgin olive oil
2 brown onions, finely sliced
½ cup brown sugar
4 tablespoons (80ml) balsamic vinegar
Sea salt and cracked black pepper
8 slices sourdough, crusts removed
100g Comté cheese, grated (or Gruyère)
4 thyme sprigs, sliced in half, to serve

- 1 Heat butter, oil and onions in a medium frying pan over low-medium heat for 4 minutes, without browning.
- 2 Add sugar and vinegar. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes, until onions are soft, golden and jammy (you will need ½ cup to serve with your comté bites). Season with salt and pepper. Set aside.
- 3 Preheat oven grill to high. Cut sourdough slices into 16 squares (2 squares per slice, 4x4cm each). Arrange squares on a baking tray and grill, on one side, for 2 minutes, until lightly golden. Set aside 8 squares.
- 4 Spread untoasted side of remaining 8 squares with caramelised onion, then top with half of the grated cheese. Grill for 1 minute until cheese begins to melt.
- 5 Place reserved squares on top, toasted side up, to form mini sandwiches. Sprinkle with remaining cheese and grill for about 4 minutes until bubbling and golden.
- 6 Trim excess cheese. Garnish each square with thyme and serve warm.

TIPS Store leftover onion in a sterilised jar in the fridge for up to 4 weeks. Leftover sourdough can be made into breadcrumbs. Freeze for up to 3 months.

CRUDITÉS WITH WHIPPED BEETROOT LABNEH & POMEGRANATE

Prep time: 25 minutes, plus overnight.

Cooking time: 50 minutes.

Serves: 4.

1½ cups plain yoghurt
1 medium beetroot or 3 x precooked baby beetroots
1 tablespoon (20ml) extra virgin olive oil
Sea salt
80g green beans, top and tailed
2 tablespoons (40ml) pomegranate molasses
½ tablespoon (10ml) fresh lemon juice
½ pomegranate, seeds only
6 Dutch carrots, peeled, leafy tops intact
2 mini cucumbers, quartered lengthways
2 French radishes, thinly sliced rounds
1 teaspoon micro coriander leaves, to serve

- 1 Make the labneh a day ahead. Place yoghurt in a cheesecloth or fine towel, wrap tightly and place in a sieve. Sit sieve on a medium bowl with room for whey to drip into bowl. Place in fridge overnight.
 - 2 Preheat oven to 180°C fan. If using fresh beetroot, place beetroot on a piece of foil on a small baking tray. Drizzle beetroot with oil, sprinkle with salt and wrap tightly. Bake for 50 minutes, then set aside to cool.
 - 3 Bring a pot of salted water to the boil. Meanwhile, prepare a bowl of iced water. Place beans into boiling water for 30 seconds to blanch, then transfer to iced water to cool. Drain and set aside.
 - 4 Place 2 tablespoons of labneh in a blender with beetroot, molasses, juice and a pinch of salt. Blend until smooth and fluffy, then fold in remaining labneh.
 - 5 Divide beetroot labneh among 4 coupe glasses. Scatter over pomegranate seeds. Arrange crudités on one side of coupe glass, nestling vegetables gently into labneh.
 - 6 Scatter over coriander leaves.
- TIP** Vegetables and beetroot labneh can be prepared a day ahead.

SALMON WITH TANGELO, SWEET MISO DRESSING & PEA FURIKAKE

Prep time: 15 minutes.

Serves: 4.

1 tangelo, half in segments, half zested and juiced (50ml)
1 tablespoon white miso paste
1 tablespoon (20ml) rice wine vinegar
150g sashimi-grade salmon, thinly sliced
2 teaspoons sesame oil, 1 tablespoon pea furikake seasoning and purple micro herbs, to serve

- 1 To make dressing, place zest and 50ml of the juice in a small bowl. Add miso paste and vinegar and whisk until smooth.
 - 2 Arrange salmon slices on a serving plate. Tear tangelo segments and scatter pieces over salmon. Drizzle over dressing.
 - 3 Drizzle over sesame oil, sprinkle over furikake, scatter over micro herbs and serve.
- TIP** You can substitute blood orange for tangelo, if needed. **H&G**

ENTERTAINING **H&G**

Wine glasses and cocktail saucer, all Bohemia Crystal. Sharing trays, In the Roundhouse. 'Flocca' tablecloth and 'Basix' napkin, both Hale Mercantile Co.

*Salmon with tangelo,
sweet miso dressing
& pea furikake*

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Top 50 Rooms

THE PANEL FROM H&G AND WINNINGS WAS IN AWE OF THE DESIGN INNOVATION AND TALENT ON SHOW IN THIS YEAR'S TOP 50 ROOMS ENTRIES. SELECTING THE FINALISTS TOOK SOME DELIBERATION, BUT THE RESULTS ARE IN WITH THIS STELLAR LINE-UP.

IN CONJUNCTION WITH



1 STUDIO PRINEAS

Eva-Marie Prineas

Luxury and environmental

responsibility coexist with exuberance in this vibrant apartment kitchen. With Studio Prineas' passion for heritage conservation and a commitment to environmentally low-impact design, it's no surprise the result is a thoughtfully restrained space with gentle sculptural elements and a rich colour palette that exudes warmth. "We applied a reductive approach to 'rescale' its volume, modernise its expression and enhance its quality of light," says Eva-Marie.

studioprineas.com.au.



Words by Debbie Duncan. Styling by Jack Milenkovic. Photography by Felix Forest.

Kitchens

It was the bold use of colour, texture and richly detailed natural stone that stood out as features in these clever designs. Interesting treatments of rangehoods as focal points was another theme to note. And while the bespoke forms and eye-catching nature of every scheme is clear, each room has been designed with functionality in mind, demonstrating that practical family spaces can be beautiful and personal, too.

ROOM NOTES Ceiling painted Dulux Balsam Pear. Joinery in Navurban Classic American oak, New Age Veneers. Microcement benchtop. Splashback in Vogue System tiles, Classic Ceramics. Benchseat in Warwick 'Victory' fabric in Gold. Nemo 'Lampe De Marseille' wall light, Cult. Artwork by Gemma Smith. 'Pallido' herringbone flooring, Havwoods.



2 ARENT & PYKE

Sarah-Jane Pyke

Connection, vibrancy and

reflection are top design considerations

at Arent & Pyke. These elements are reflected in this Sydney harbourside kitchen with the utmost respect for the traditional 1920s architecture. The deep marine blue sheen on the joinery takes its cues from the scintillating water views outside, while the gold and rusty veins of the Caravaggio stone nod to the sand and earth of the shoreline.

arentpyke.com.

ROOM NOTES Joinery, Elan. Benchtop in Caravaggio quartzite, Worldstone. Franke tapware and Miele cooktop, Winnings. Drawer pulls, The English Tapware Company. Bar stools, Cult. Artwork by Andre Piguet, Station Gallery.



3 GREG NATALE

Greg Natale

Luminous and serene best describe this European coastal-inspired kitchen reinterpreted with a modern edge. In his inimitable style, Greg has conjured a jewel-like space layered with swathes of rich marble and warm timber tones. His passion for materiality, colour, pattern and geometry shines through in this outstanding design. gregnatale.com.

ROOM NOTES Wall, benchtop, plinths and island in Breccia Capria stone. Tapware, Astra Walker. Pitt cooktop, Winnings. Apparatus pendant light. Chevron oak flooring in Freado, Tongue & Groove.





4 HARE + KLEIN

Meryl Hare

Preserving and honouring the architecture of this 1898 home designed by Sir Talbot Hobbs was paramount – and the kitchen is a stunning example of this commitment. Original floorboards, architraves and skirtings details were all retained, while a contemporary, stylish kitchen evolved sensitively amid the heritage detailing. This room is a testament to Hare + Klein's philosophy that "an interior should balance aesthetics with layers of visual generosity". hareklein.com.au.

ROOM NOTES Walls painted Porter's Paints Half Cashmere. Joinery in Evener Spicewood, Elton Group. Benchtops, splashback and plinths in Rilio marble, Granite & Marble Works. Island benchtop in Aeris Dekton, Cosentino. Brodware tapware, Sea of White. Bar stools, Cult. Dining chairs, Living Edge.





5 SMAC STUDIO

Shona McElroy

Water views, soaring ceilings and a sunny north-facing aspect meant this home – and its kitchen – had good bones. Enter Shona who resolved layout and lighting issues and introduced sublime stone finishes reminiscent of Hollywood glamour. Shona instilled a serene aesthetic and graceful curves in the space. “By rounding off all those 90-degree angles, the open plan space now feel more relaxed and visually soothing,” she says. smacstudio.com.au.

ROOM NOTES Joinery in Laminex Porcelain Blush. Benchtops in Calacatta Verde marble, CDK Stone. Smeg cooktop, Winnings. Sconce, Etsy. Chevron flooring in Penza, Tongue & Groove.



6 DECUS

Alexandra Donohoe Church

Bold yet grounded best describes this stunning kitchen and winning room for 2025. Inspired by the work of French Neo-romantic functional artist, William Guillon, interior design and architecture studio Decus worked closely with local artisan JN Custom Metal to achieve a kitchen with unique shapes and depth. The studio's focus on bespoke design and artisanal craft is demonstrated in the organic form of the 300kg brass boxed rangehood – a feat of engineering and the height of visual sophistication. decus.com.au.



ROOM NOTES Joinery in oak, Blank Joinery. Island in Four Seasons granite, Granite & Marble Works. Bar in Cipollino Ondulato, CDK Stone. Rangehood, JN custom Metals. Wolf oven, Winnings. Pendants, Elsa Foulon. Table, Joel Elliott Furniture. Chairs, Cult. Ceramics, Jodie Fried. Flooring, Tongue & Groove.

WINNER

Room of
the Year

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WELCOME HOME





7 ANNA.CARIN

Anna-Carin McNamara

The soft, ocean-inspired tones of the light blue quartzite and matte blue joinery in this blissful kitchen embody the design's emphasis on wellness, longevity and calm. Refined Scandinavian influences expressed through natural materials and exquisite craftsmanship form the foundation of the studio's work. The kitchen now forms "a natural flow into two expansive terraces one of which is dedicated to wellness, featuring a sauna and ice bath as a reflection of the client's commitment to rest and rejuvenation," says Anna-Carin.

annacarindesign.com.au.

ROOM NOTES Joinery painted WattyI Dolphin. Benchtop, splashback and island in Pallido Blue quartzite, Worldstone. Fisher & Paykel cooktop, Winnings. Brodware pull-out mixer, Candana. Linear pendant light, Tovo Lighting. Artwork by Amelia Axton. Floorboards in Winter Frost, Preference Floors.



ROOM NOTES Walls and joinery painted Dulux custom colour. Door painted Porter's Paints Green Papaya. Island base painted Resene Midnight Moss. Benchtop and island in Breccia Capraia marble, Corsi & Nicolai. Nook tiles, Byzantine Tiles. Basin and tap, both The English Tapware Company.



8 KIMPTON INTERIORS

Lucinda Kimpton

A deep appreciation for English charm and character from the owners saw Lucinda tasked with reinterpreting this kitchen into a model of classic-contemporary style. With curated layers of pattern and colour at the heart of this leading design studio's aesthetic, thoughtful detailing and layering have imbued the space with colour and energy. kimptoninteriors.com.au.



9 LAWLESS & MEYERSON

Jo Lawless

Generous living and entertaining areas were top of the brief, so Jo rose to the challenge and created two kitchen zones: a concealed hard-working kitchen and an on-display entertainer's kitchen. Enriching their clients' experience throughout the design and building process is what Lawless & Meyerson do so well and this kitchen's transformation is testament to that philosophy.

lawlessandmeyerson.com.

ROOM NOTES Joinery in E veneer APLI Xilo Planked White, Elton Group. Benchtops in Fenix Nero Ingo, Nover. Benchtop in Artagres Beton porcelain in Concrete, Artedomus. Island in Antique Brown granite, CDK Stone. Vola tapware and Pitt cooktop, Winnings. Bar stool, Poliform. Artworks by Morgan Stokes, Curatorial+Co, and from Nasha Gallery. Clemont limestone flooring, Worldstone.





10 ALEXANDER & CO

Amy Dodge & Alice Noguès

A visually complex blend of burgundy, purple and cream, the Calacatta Viola marble in this kitchen emphasises the heritage character of the Victorian residence it calls home. "With this history and legacy in mind, our intention was to balance the practicality and functionality of family life with our client's love of entertaining, whilst also respecting, retaining and heroing the structure's historical character and unique features," says Amy. alexanderand.co.

WINNER

Best
Kitchen

SPONSORED BY

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WELCOME HOME

ROOM NOTES Ceiling painted Dulux Lexicon Quarter. Walls painted Porter's Paint Double Wood Smoke. Joinery in American oak, Ample Interiors. Custom concrete island. Splashback in Calacatta Viola marble, BC Stone. Tapware, Astra Walker. Pendant light, Space. Table, CDF Studio. Rug, Designer Rugs.

Styling by Jack Milenkovic (g), Claire Delmar (io). Photography Dave Wheeler (g), Anson Smart (io).

Bathrooms



From old-world charm to contemporary sleek-and-polished, our panel loved the broad range of creative schemes showcased in this line-up of bathroom finalists. Each of these spaces was designed uniquely for the homeowner, with their preferences, lifestyle and context in mind. We noticed a move toward freestanding, furniture-like vanities that either ‘float’ or become the focal point in the room. Tactile limewash and microcement, natural stone with swirling veining, and curved gooseneck tapware were also recurring elements, all contributing to a sense of softness, retreat and tranquillity.



11 B.E ARCHITECTURE

Andrew Piva

Tactile references to bygone eras add a layered nostalgia to this breathtaking room, from hexagonal tiles to a bespoke limewash. The home, a 150-year-old Italianate terrace, is blessed with heritage character, which influenced its redesign. "The freestanding bath and 'furniture-like' curved stainless steel vanity feel as if they are found objects sitting lightly in a space rather than being built-in," says architect Andrew Piva. "While the polished vanity was originally contentious, 3D renders helped the clients understand." **bearchitecture.com.**

ROOM NOTES Walls and ceiling, Bauwerk Colour. Vanity in mirrored-finish stainless steel, Fine Form Joinery. Basin and tiles in Carrara marble, Granite Works Australia and RMS Traders. Bath, The English Tapware Company. Tapware, Brodware. Curtain, O'Gorman's Melbourne. Builder, W Build.





12 ALEXANDRA KIDD INTERIOR DESIGN

Morgan Reid & Jessica Gombault

Through the thoughtful selection of natural materials in rich yet understated tones, these designers created an elegant, tranquil retreat. Fluted glass doors conceal separate shower and toilet spaces, green marble wraps the room and curved sculptural vanity, and antique brass notes bring a tactile warmth to the details. “The inspiration stemmed from the idea of retreat – not in a dramatic sense, but as a quiet, restorative escape,” says interior design associate Morgan Reid. “The green marble, with its flowing veining and grounding tone, became the emotional anchor of the room. Sculptural yet serene, it brings a quiet gravitas that defines the space.” alexandrakidd.com.



ROOM NOTES Walls in Mineral Fox Cocomilk microcement. Vanity in Beauty Green marble, Granite & Marble Works. Faucet Strommen ‘Pegasi’ tapware in Antique Brass, Studio xOx. ‘Loopi’ wall sconce, Articolo Studios. Floor in Florence marble, STS Stone.



13 DECUS

Alexandra Donohoe Church

Undulating and organic shapes and luxurious natural stone and metallic flourishes make this “jewellery box” of a powder room a treat for the senses. Clever craftsmanship is on show with warm blush microcement surfaces and a custom cast bronze basin, nestled snugly into the domed space. The visual intrigue continues with the mesmerising natural forms of pebbles and rocks rippled through the Magente quartzite shelf and floor, grounding the room. decus.com.au.

Styling by Claire Delmar (12) and Joseph Gardner (13). Photography by Alicia Taylor (12) and Anson Smart (13).

ROOM NOTES Walls in Calce Company microcement, Triple A Rendering. Custom mirror and vanity in cast bronze, Merwe. Vola tapware, Candana. Sconce by Amande Haeghen, Chiara Colombini. Shelf and floor in Magente quartzite, Artedomus.



14 ALEXANDER & CO

Aimy Dodge & Alice Noguès

Decadent details and rich chocolate tones create a sense of theatre in this opulent ensuite. Natural light encircles floating mirrors and a marble-topped, aged brass pedestal vanity, set forward in front of the windows – what would usually be a controversial layout choice allows functional joinery to become the hero. Keeping the 1890s Victorian context in mind, the designers worked with the homeowner on “his vision to fuse the historic story of the property with his passion for the arts... creating a theatrical, contemporary and timeless residence.” **alexanderand.co.**



WINNER
Best
Bathroom

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Styling by Claire Delmar. Photography by Anson Smart.

ROOM NOTES Mirrors and vanity in Pro Metal Design aged brass, Ample Interiors & Joinery. Benchtop and floor border in Calacatta Viola marble, Artedomus. Sconce, Barovier & Toso. Tapware and towel rails, Astra Walker. Floor tiles, TeraNova. Artwork by Yvette Coppersmith. Vase, Hein Studio. Stool, Dimitri Vargas. Builder, TOKI Constructions.



15 OLIVIA GIANGROSSO INTERIORS

Olivia Giangrosso

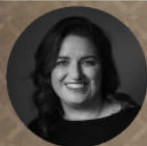
Sweet simplicity, infused with a nod to heritage style, gives this main bathroom in Sydney's Eastern Suburbs a calming allure. Rendered microcement walls in a warm white tone create a sense of space and light; a freestanding bathtub with a traditional silhouette adds interest, as do the inset marble floor tiles. The combination of elements gives just the right amount of personality, without overwhelming. The result is a beautiful space we'd all love to escape to.

oliviagiangrosso.com.

ROOM NOTES Walls in microcement, Triple A Rendering. Window, Fincon Installations. Vanity, Kitchen Complex. Benchtop in Marblo, SCF Interiors. Wall light, Dunlin. The Water Monopoly tapware, The English Tapware Company. Victoria + Albert bath, Cass Brothers. Stool, TF Design. Floor tiles, Inigo Jones & Co.



ROOM NOTES Walls in Virginia White 'Sofia' wallpaper in Oyster. Vanity in Haymes Paints Kendall Rose. Benchtop in Pink Rhino honed marble. Door frames in Viola Oro, wall tiles in Blush, and floor mosaics, all Byzantine Design. Perrin & Rowe basin and tapware, The English Tapware Company. 'Carrick Leaf' wall lights, Vaughan.



16 KIMPTON INTERIORS

Lucinda Kimpton

Set within an early 1900s homestead, this primary ensuite balances a boutique aesthetic with practicality. Charming layers of pattern and colour are added via wallpaper, textiles, gloss tiles and mosaics. The happy owners share: "After a holiday in England, we felt drawn to recreate an English country aesthetic. We love that the house still feels true to its heritage. [It's] warm and welcoming." kimptoninteriors.com.au.





17 DECUS

Alexandra Donohoe Church & Charlene Cong

"The brief for the primary suite was to create a serene, grown-up sanctuary," says Alexandra. "The space needed to offer quiet retreat and enduring comfort." The ensuite seamlessly blends with the adjoining dressing room with the continuation of oak joinery. Thoughtful details make this space special, such as the custom wall light – inspired by a pair of vintage Cartier earrings and forged by a local metalworker. decus.com.au.



ROOM NOTES Walls in Calce Company Marmorino. Shower wall, vanity and smaller floor tiles in Monet marble, larger floor tiles in Champagne quartzite, all Worldstone. Falper 'Homey' freestanding bath, Winnings. Brodware tapware in Brushed Nickel, Candana. Custom wall sconce by Decus, @saulforge.



18 STUDIO AEM

Alexandra Mason

The respectful consideration of new and original materials stood out to our panel of judges in this inviting main bathroom, located in Sydney's Northern Beaches. Sandstone walls were uncovered and restored and timber beams added to the ceiling, with the vanity designed in an equally warm tone. But it was the charming copper bathtub that truly swayed the vote. A warm soak in the tub with the garden beckoning beyond is an alluring prospect for traditionalists and daydreamers alike. studioaem.com.au.

ROOM NOTES Ceiling painted Dulux Lexicon Quarter. Vanity, Briggs Veneers. Benchtop in travertine, CDK Stone. Tapware and fixtures, Astra Walker. The Water Monopoly bath, and Joseph Giles joinery pulls, all The English Tapware Company. Sconce, Articolo Studio. Antico Cotto Luce floor tiles, Eco Outdoor.





19 LAWLESS & MEYERSON

Jo Lawless & Emily Sandford

It's the calm confidence of this apartment bathroom that gives it a peaceful serenity. "The layout was planned to feel open and generous with careful attention paid to light, flow and visual balance," says Jo. "The design needed to feel elevated and glamorous, but always with restraint." Understated yet elegant, a clean minimalism allows the feature black quartzite vanity to shine, complemented with sophisticated touches in the simple curved forms of Serge Mouille sconces and Vola basin spouts. lawlessandmeyerson.com.

ROOM NOTES Walls in Artegres Beton tiles in Ice, Artedomus. Vanity in quartzite, Worldstone. Vola tapware, Bathroom X. Apaïser bath, Candana. Serge Mouille sconces, Cult. Towel rails, Ceadeesign. Stool, Moebel. Crema Lyra floor tiles, Bisanna.





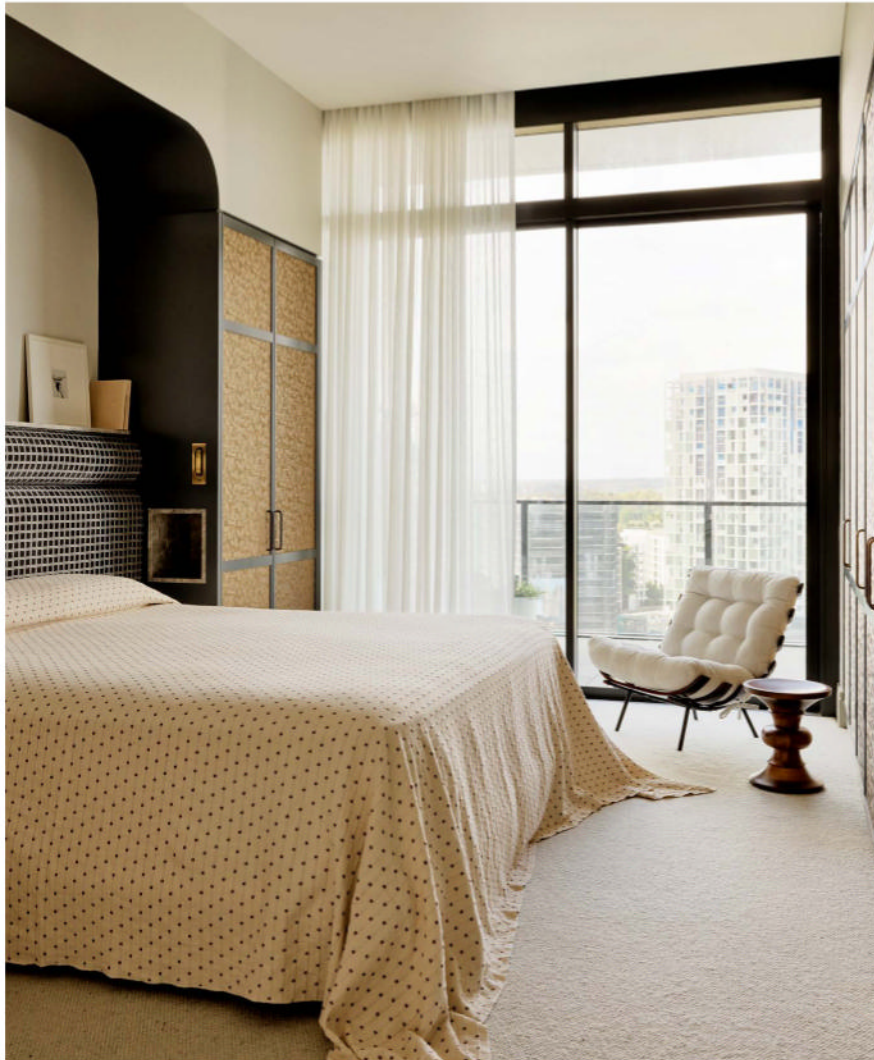
20 GREG NATALE

Greg Natale

Vibrant colour drenching brings the drama to this glam basement powder room. A textured burgundy stucco applied to the curved walls and ceiling seamlessly envelops the space with warmth, while a striking Rosso Levante marble vanity adds detailing with its wave-like veining. The owners requested a space that was “bold, theatrical and unforgettable”, briefing a guest-facing room “that felt immersive and jewel-like”. Greg well and truly delivered. gregnatale.com.

ROOM NOTES Walls in stucco polished plaster to match Benjamin Moore Ruby Dusk. Vanity in Rosso Levante marble. Fantini basin tapware in Matt British Gold PVD, Winnings. ‘Quadrant & Sphere’ wall light, Square in Circle Studio. Greg Natale floor tiles, Teranova.

Bedrooms



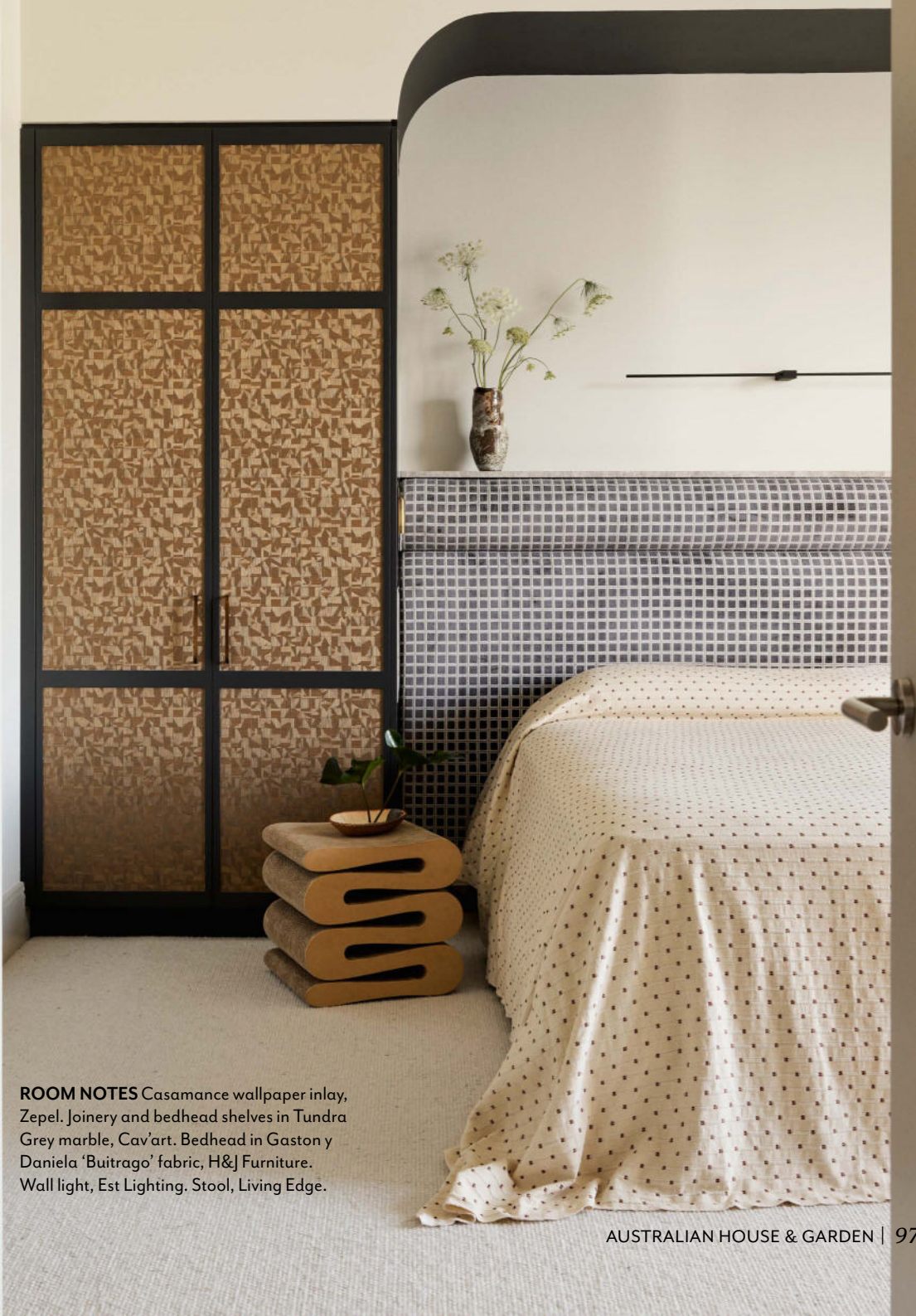
Each of these rooms creates a distinct atmosphere, from serene and soothing to warm and cocooning. Every detail is considered, with visual interest conveyed through textured joinery finishes, floor-to-ceiling sheer curtains and tasteful colour palettes. Thoughtful planning connects rooms to views and adjoining ensuites and wardrobe spaces, strengthening the sense of cohesion. Layers of linen and velvet, grasscloth and interesting wallpapers, bespoke upholstered bedheads and beautiful lighting for ambience are all design features the judging panel noticed and loved.



21 LYNNE BRADLEY INTERIORS

Lynne Bradley

Balancing artistry with practicality, this primary bedroom in a penthouse exudes comfort, yet evokes the luxury and ambience of a boutique hotel. "Materiality was critical – all finishes needed to be tactile, durable and visually striking," says Lynne. The owners couldn't be happier: "After downsizing, we wanted to transform our apartment into a true sanctuary that was calm, beautiful and deeply functional. Discovering Lynne Bradley Interiors' work was a turning point." lynnebradleyinteriors.com.au.



ROOM NOTES Casamance wallpaper inlay, Zepel. Joinery and bedhead shelves in Tundra Grey marble, Cav'art. Bedhead in Gaston y Daniela 'Buitrago' fabric, H&J Furniture. Wall light, Est Lighting. Stool, Living Edge.



22 GREG NATALE

Greg Natale

A striking study in sculptural elegance, Greg Natale's bold yet refined design uses stone to define transitions between bedroom, walk-in robe and ensuite. The owners' passion for Italian design and Parisian maximalism informed the palette of deep green, mauve and terracotta and rich materiality, while the unashamedly extravagant Neofutur bedhead and cherry blossom wallcovering add a dose of theatre. "This project exemplifies the sophistication and global perspective of contemporary Australian design, seamlessly merging local creativity with international craftsmanship to deliver a home that is as artful as it is liveable," says Greg. gregnatale.com.

ROOM NOTES Walls painted Benjamin Moore Southwest Pottery. Iksel wallpaper in White Blossom. Verdi Alpi marble. Pendant light, Allied Maker. Bedside table, 1stDibs. Table lamp, Martinelli Luce. Rug, Cadrys. Flooring, Tongue & Groove.





23 DECUS

Alexandra Donohoe Church
Reoriented to embrace the

dawn and uninterrupted views over the ocean, this generous primary suite is now a contemplative space. Alexandra gave materiality a starring role with cognac-toned leather and brass lighting. "It's a room that feels both grounded and expansive, designed to hold space for rest and rhythm," she says. "Our focus on bespoke furniture, lighting and joinery is underscored by our value of artisanal craft; a source of humanist energy and identity in our spaces." decus.com.au.

ROOM NOTES Wall painted Porter's Paints Popcorn. Artwork by Michael Cusack, Olsen Gallery. Joinery in American oak inlaid with Phillip Jeffries 'Totally Tatami' grasscloth, The Textile Company. Pinch wall light, Winnings. Flooring, Tongue & Groove. Rug, Cadrys.



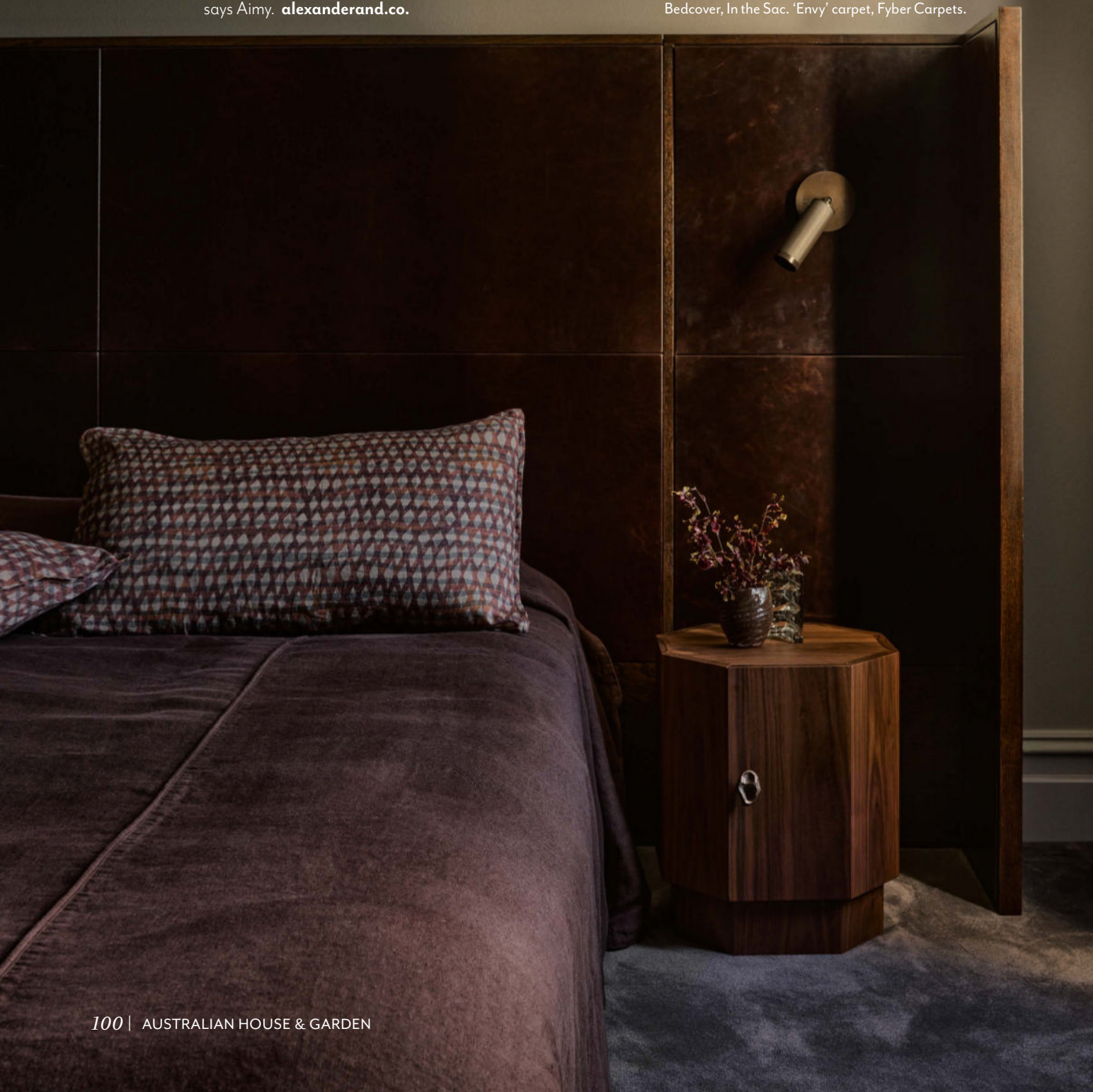
24 ALEXANDER & CO

Aimy Dodge & Alice Noguès

A theatrical moment in the form of a striking amber Murano 'Tronchi' chandelier from Cleo Collects sets the tone for this atmospheric parents' retreat. Artfully reconfigured by Alexander & CO to enhance visual connection, three spaces were devised to encompass a sleeping zone with bespoke joinery, walk-in robe/dressing room and an outdoor balcony positioned to take in the rooftop garden and district views. "The space captures a grounded, mature palette of dark leathers and brown veined stone and reflects the client's passion for the arts," says Aimy. **alexanderand.co.**



ROOM NOTES Walls painted Porter's Paints Half Grey Pepper. Bedhead in Hume International 'Antico Havana' leather, Ample Interiors. Bedside table, CDF Studio. 'Pinch' knob, Tigmi. Wall light, LightCo. Society Limonta pillowcases, Ondene. Bedcover, In the Sac. 'Envy' carpet, Fyber Carpets.



WINNER
Best
Bedroom

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25 SMAC STUDIO
Shona McElroy

Old Hollywood glamour

shines in this elegant bedroom. Shona loved the Spanish Mission-style facade of the building so extended the charming detailing into the interior with the addition of architraves and cornices. "I envisioned a serene interior that celebrated the home's soaring ceilings and north-facing aspect," she says. smacstudio.com.au.



ROOM NOTES Joinery painted Watty! Sure Thing. Artwork by Elizabeth O'Connor. Wall light, Bloomingdales Lighting. Astra Walker tapware, Winnings. Tiles, Inigo Jones. 'Plume' carpet, Signature Carpets.

Laundries



The laundry is one of the hardest working rooms in a home. We spend so much time washing, drying and sorting clothes here, and this room often multitasks as mudroom/dumping ground/storage space. But laundries are often left as a design afterthought. Far from just functional, the following designs prove that you can create an elegant yet practical space you'll love spending time in. It's the details that really elevate the experience of each room, from natural stone benchtops and calming pastel painted walls to bronze handles and a splash of pattern through a custom blind or tile lay.



26 WILD ORCHID

Sarah Parry-Okeden

Floral references and functionality abound in this laundry room, epitomised by the generous laundry sink that doubles as a floral-arranging station and a clever bath for furry friends, such as Cavoodle Sheldon. "The floral mural wallpaper references our core biophilic design principles we closely follow at Wild Orchid, bringing floral illustrations inside," says Sarah. Thoughtful appliance selections, bespoke joinery and layered materiality blend elegance, practicality and character with ease. wildorchidspaces.com.

ROOM NOTES 'Rustica Wildflowers' wallpaper, Natty and Polly. Joinery painted Dulux Snowy Mountains Quarter and Porter's Paints Chintz Grey. Benchtop, splashback and basin in Carrara marble, Euro Marble. Bath/shower mixer, The English Tapware Company. Miele appliances, Winnings. Ceiling light, Anthropologie. Wall lights, Etsy. Vintage artworks. Sandstone floor tiles, Hayda Natural Stone. Black floor tiles, Tile Market.

WINNER

Best
Laundry

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ROOM NOTES Joinery painted Taubmans Dapple Grey. Door, Window. Handles, Restoration Hardware. 'Belfast' basin and Miele appliances, all Winnings. 'Nero Marquina' black border and floor tiles and 'Thassos' octagon tiles in Celeste Blue, all Marble & Ceramic Corp.



27 STUDIO TRIO

Lauren Mahoney

A 1913 Federation home

called for a laundry redesign that reflects a deep focus on heritage features and effortlessly blends timeless elegance with thoughtful detailing. "I've always been drawn to the layered, refined style seen in American design, particularly the way traditional timber work, statement lighting, and well-balanced proportions create warmth and sophistication," says Lauren.

studiotrio.com.au.

ROOM NOTES Joinery painted Watty! Potemkin. Benchtop in Medulla granite, Granite & Marble Works. 'Tezra' joinery knobs in Brushed Brass, ABI Interiors.

28 WOODS & WARNER

Jacinta Woods & Sonia Warner

The Australian landscape was the inspiration for the soothing colour palette of this fresh and contemporary laundry. "Woods & Warner were engaged from concept to completion ensuring every detail from material choice, joinery design and soft furnishing element was cohesive," says the owner.

woodsandwarner.com.au.





29 GREG NATALE

Greg Natale

A playful sense of design permeates this charming and efficient laundry. A lively pattern of light blue, black and white chequerboard floor tiles sets the stage for joinery in calming light blue. "The client wanted each space to feel cohesive within the overall scheme yet possess its own distinct personality. This meant creating a room that was not only highly functional but also visually charming," says Greg. gregnatale.com.

ROOM NOTES Ceiling painted Dulux Lexicon Quarter. Joinery painted in Dulux Bay's Water 30%. Benchtop and splashback in Statuario Maximus, Caesarstone. Miele appliances, Winnings. 'Futura' floor tiles in Blue, White and Black, Perini.





ROOM NOTES Walls and joinery painted Dulux custom colour; trims Dulux Natural White. Blind in 'Nine Muses' fabric, Tigger Hall Design. Benchtop and splashback in Sky Flower marble, Corsi Nicolai. Basin and tapware, both The English Tapware Company. Floor tiles, Byzantine Tiles.



30 KIMPTON INTERIORS

Lucinda Kimpton

A working farm called for a laundry that had easy access to the outside and could double as a mudroom. Enter Lucinda, who thoughtfully reimagined the space, preserving a sense of the home's heritage, while establishing refined design principles and meeting practical needs. Kimpton Interiors' passion for curated layering of pattern and colour shines through. kimptoninteriors.com.au.



31 A FOR ARCHITECTURE

Anna Rozen, with Ben Scott Garden Design

At Kooyong House, oversized windows and doors connect the rear of the home to a generous backyard, with materials that continue from the interior to the exterior for an easy transition. The homeowners loved the relaxed vibe of Byron Bay and “wanted to emulate that resort-style feel for their new home,” says Anna. “The goal was to make everyday life feel effortless: morning routines that spill out onto the terrace, shared meals with the doors wide open, and spaces where the whole family can slow down.” aforarchitecture.com.au.

ROOM NOTES Landscape design by Ben Scott Garden Design. Build by GIA Renovations. Concrete slimline bricks in Alabaster, National Masonry. Aluminium-framed windows and doors, Yokor Windows. Joinery in Ventech American Walnut. Taj Mahal quartzite natural stone benchtops, WK Stone.



Indoor-outdoor Connection

These homes all enjoy an enhanced sense of space, granting their owners daily glimpses of their gardens and endless opportunities for alfresco relaxation and entertaining. Thanks to generous glazing, innovative floor plans and continued use of materials between interior and exterior zones, the lines between in and out are blurred, ensuring ease of movement and adaptability for all-season liveability. This truly is the Australian dream.



32 HEARTLY

Mikayla Rose

Designed as a retreat for its owner of 30 years, Peppercorn House is named after the mature tree that brings dappled shade to its interiors. The main living area is anchored by large-format picture windows, which frame the garden and help to expand the perceived volume of the home. A muted interior palette allows the light and landscape to animate the space. "The result is a home that nurtures stillness and reflection," says Mikayla. heartly.com.au.

ROOM NOTES Build by A.P Build Group. Landscape design by Kate Seddon Landscape Design. Interiors painted Dulux Natural White Half. Joinery in NAV Navenner Raw Sorrento. Benchtop in Super White stone, G-Lux. KWC mixer tap and Franke sink, both Winnings. Artwork by Benjamin Ashton. Chairs, Tait. Flooring in American oak, Forrest Timber Products.



WINNER

Indoor-outdoor Connection

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33 HARE + KLEIN

Meryl Hare

Following years of neglect, a historic home in Perth has undergone a much-needed transformation at the hands of Hare + Klein and Spaceagency.

In order to reinvigorate the exterior, a massive concrete addition was demolished and a new exterior courtyard designed in its place. Floor-to-ceiling glass sliding doors open to a Japanese cherry blossom tree, and a slatted timber frame brings definition, privacy and shade to the area.

"The new home is comfortable and compatible with the owners' lifestyle, and takes into account the Western Australian weather extremes," says Meryl. hareklein.com.au.

ROOM NOTES 'Malmo' outdoor armchairs and 'Verona' outdoor coffee table, Coco Republic.
Build by Talo Construction. Landscape design by Robert Finnie Design.



34 KWD Kate Walker

For the third stage of this home's two-year renovation, Kate turned her focus to the outdoor spaces, ensuring they enjoyed a seamless connection to the indoors. The owners and their friends enjoy constant views of the garden through floor-to-ceiling windows and doors, and an enviable ability to move between zones with ease. "Traversing the garden to the pavilion allows for an experience of the elements where the sunken fire pit cocoons us as the garden matures," says the owner. katewalkerdesign.com.au.

Top
50
Rooms

ROOM NOTES Landscape design by Plume Studio. Outdoor furniture, Restoration Hardware. Indoor sofa and armchairs, Jordan. 'Eggcup' stool, Mark Tuckey. Rug, Cadrys.





35 STUDIO PRINEAS

Eva-Marie Prineas

Blessed with two courtyards either side of the kitchen-dining zone, this Victorian semi in Sydney's Inner West feels much larger than the compact site would suggest. Sliding doors enhance the outdoor connection, while the rear courtyard, with its integrated seating, creates a green room between the house, garage and graffitied urban laneway beyond. It's testament to Eva-Marie's design approach of adapting homes to their location. "The refined and elegant resolution of living spaces and courtyards connects to the graffitied laneway energy in an unexpected and joyful way," she says. studioprineas.com.au

ROOM NOTES Joinery in NAV Navurban Classic American Oak and Laminex Dulux Moroccan Leather, Concept Design Kitchens & Joinery. Benchtop in Rosso Orobico marble, Art of Marble. Stool, Great Dane. Dining chairs, Thonet. &Tradition table, Cult. Linear pendant light, South Drawn. Flooring, Havwoods. Build by Riverside Building & Design.



Photography by Chris Warnes.

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abiinteriors.com.au

Colour

From soft wheat-toned walls and rich emerald velvet to pretty floral wallpaper and vibrant chartreuse trims, the memorable hues encountered in these rooms are emotionally evocative and exude personality.

Words by Bethan Lacob. Styling by Jack Milenkovic. Photograph by Anson Smart.



36 ARENT & PYKE *Juliette Arent*

An off-the-plan new build was in need of character and warmth, so the empty-nester owners called on this seasoned design studio. "Treating the walls and ceiling like a primary canvas, we coated them in a pale terracotta shade that sensorially elevates the room. Its soothing, velvety sheen tonally transitions from day to night," says Juliette. "Sunlight illuminates the almond surfaces that deepen to a gentle coral glow at sundown." The warm foundation is accented with a jewel-like palette that plays with notes of emerald, sapphire, ruby, carnelian and amethyst. arentpyke.com.

ROOM NOTES Artwork by Oscar Nimmo, Nasha Gallery. De La Espada coffee table, Spence & Lyda from Winnings. 'Daphne Terra' floor lamp, Lumina. Edra sofa, Space. Reuber Henning rug, Halcyon Lake.



37 SALLY WILKINS

Sally Wilkins

It's the whimsical floral notes of the Thibaut 'Meadow' wallpaper that set the tone for this pretty yet balanced home study. "What was once a rather stiff and masculine study has been completely softened and given a more feminine touch," says Sally. Shelves in Porter's Paints Oaten and sisal flooring offset the femininity with warmth and texture, while a contemporary selection of designer furniture and decor keeps the scheme elevated and prevents it from veering into overly floral-femme territory.

sallywilkinsstudio.com.au.

ROOM NOTES Thibaut 'Meadow' wallpaper in Brown. Joinery in Porter's Paints Oaten. Artemide lamp and Tacchini chair, both Stylecraft. Sisal flooring, Natural Floorcovering Centres. Vessels, Space, Tania Rollond and The DEA Store.



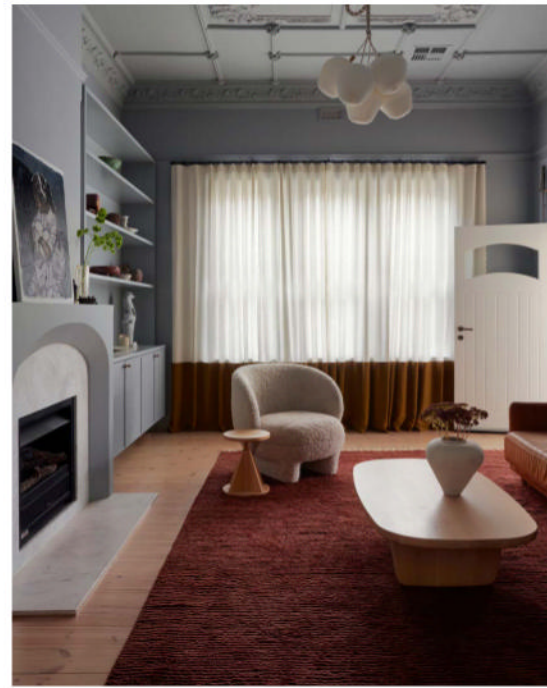
38 KIMPTON INTERIORS

Lucinda Kimpton

"Inspired by the rich, saturated hues of English country houses, the palette is both timeless and expressive," says Lucinda who brought old-world charm to this formal dining room. Joyful tones of chartreuse bring unexpected delight, complemented by rich magenta accents in a Todd Hunter artwork, an emerald green chandelier and a honed Verde Menta marble mantel. In the kitchen, a soft creamy custom Dulux paint colour applied to the walls and joinery tempers the bolder tones for a sense of balance.

kimptoninteriors.com.au.

ROOM NOTES Trims in Porter's Paints Green Papaya. Walls in Greenland 'Color Elegance I' wallpaper in Cream Gold. Chandelier, Cromwell. Kitchen in Dulux custom colour. Artwork by Todd Hunter. Mantel, Richard Ellis Design.



39 GEORGIE SHEPHERD INTERIOR DESIGN

Georgie Shepherd

The owners of this Adelaide room requested a grown-up retreat designed as a space to unwind. As passionate collectors of art, and lovers of colour and travel, they wanted a room that would "reflect their personality while offering a sense of calm and sophistication," explains Georgie. "Our design response was to create an enveloping, warm atmosphere layered with meaningful details. The artwork by Clara Adolfs adds a final touch of serenity, grounding the space in beauty and emotion."

georgieshepherd.com.au.

ROOM NOTES Walls and ceiling in Haymes Paints Light Grey. Curtains in Mokum 'Satori Stonewash' linen in Whitewash and Ochre, Decorating Solutions. 'The Bouquet' chandelier, Le Klint. *The Other Room I* artwork by Clara Adolfs.

WINNER
Best Use
of Colour

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40 GREG NATALE
Greg Natale

This glamorous apartment feels immersive and transportive thanks to its confident use of colour. In the dining room, soft green walls contrast with the adjoining pink-hued hallway. A multi-hued 'Meltingpot' dining table (cleverly made from recycled plastic) makes a bold statement, surrounded by dining chairs upholstered in a muted magenta fabric. Mirrored wall panels crafted from two shades of coloured glass add the final flourish. gregnatale.com.

ROOM NOTES Walls painted Benjamin Moore Van Alen Green. Kooij 'Meltingpot Ellipse' table, Design Within Reach. Juliana Lima Vasconcellos 'Giraffe' chairs in Greg Natale 'Cemento' fabric in Merlot, The Invisible Collection. Barovier&Toso pastel Murano glass chandelier, 1st Dibs.

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Soft Furnishings

Thoughtfully layered living rooms, retreat-like bedrooms and a breakfast banquette to sink into – these inviting spaces all prioritise comfort through their clever use of upholstery, wallpaper, curtains and cushions.

Words by Stephanie Hope. Styling by Madeline McFarlane. Photograph by Lisa Cohen.



41 KIMPTON INTERIORS *Lucinda Kimpton*

Working to an evolving brief, Lucinda filled the living room of an historic homestead with soft layers that feel refined and welcoming. The owners' fresh appreciation for old-world interiors aligned perfectly with Lucinda's chosen chintz, gingham and embroidered fabrics, decorative trims and woven elements. "It was a joy to draw from this shared love of character and craftsmanship to create a home that feels storied, soulful and beautifully suited to its setting," says Lucinda. kimptoninteriors.com.au.

ROOM NOTES Walls painted Dulux custom colour. Curtains in Soane 'Pineapple Lace' linen in Moss, The Textile Company. Blinds in Bisson Bruneel 'Marawi' raffia in Naturel, Tigger Hall Design. Custom sofa in Altamira Basics fabric in Flax with Manuel Canovas 'Canard' trim, Domus Textiles. Sisal rug, Floorspace Melbourne.

WINNER
Best Use of Soft
Furnishings

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WELCOME HOME



42 KATE NIXON

Kate Nixon

This casual yet welcoming living room blends comfort with style courtesy of a thoughtful mix of materials, rich textures and a warm, grounded colour palette. A navy blue linen sofa acts as a statement piece, while cushions in warm rust, patterned blue and rich brown add depth and tactile appeal. Boucle-upholstered armchairs add to the comforting atmosphere. "This space is an inviting blend of casual ease and considered design, with colour and material working in harmony," says Kate.

katenixon.com.

ROOM NOTES Occasional chairs, Hay. Custom ottoman upholstered in Ascraft fabric. Other fabrics throughout from Westbury, Ascraft, Tigger Hall Design and Elliott Clarke. Rug, Cadrys.



43 MAINE HOUSE INTERIORS

Amy Spargo

Despite being part of a new extension, this upstairs bedroom feels as though it's always been here. "There is a stunning tree right outside the window and the design intent was to create a bed nook that felt almost like you were sleeping in a treehouse," says Amy. Rich colour selections and decorative motifs in the wallpaper and fabrics reference the owners' Indian heritage and cocoon the space, which serves as a home away from home for visiting family.

mainehouseinteriors.com.

ROOM NOTES Walls and curtains in Nina Campbell 'Jardiniere Petit Dapuri' wallpaper and fabric. 'Hulton' wall lights, The Montauk Lighting Co, with custom shades.



44 STUDIO TRIO

Lauren Mahoney

Once the drawing room, this room is now an inviting bedroom for Lauren's six-year-old daughter, Aerin. A custom-built window seat is topped with cushions that invite relaxation and play, walls are dressed with a delicate and elegant 'Messina' wallpaper by Colefax and Fowler and the bedhead, lamp shades and bench seat all feature intricate fabrics in soft shades of blue. "It's sophisticated enough to adapt as Aerin's tastes evolve over time, ensuring the bedroom remains a cherished space for many years to come," says Lauren.

studiotrio.com.au.

ROOM NOTES Walls in Colefax and Fowler 'Messina' wallpaper. Custom bedhead, lamp shade, cushions and bench seat in Salvesen Graham and Jane Churchill fabrics.



45 ARENT & PYKE

Juliette Arent

A newly built apartment was in need of a customised interior to counteract the somewhat stark finishes that came standard with the sale. In the open-plan living and dining space, Juliette and her team introduced rich gem tones and lavish materials for a sense of warmth and to elevate the room. A sumptuous green velvet sofa and sunset-orange chenille banquette lend tactility to the uplifting equation. arentpyke.com.

ROOM NOTES Venetian plaster walls, skirting and ceiling in a custom shade. Banquette in Pierre Frey 'Palladio' fabric. Cushions in Zimmer + Rohde 'Chapan' fabric. Artwork by Mark Maurangi Carrol, Nasha Gallery. 'Eclipse' wall lights, Nook Collections. Edra sofa, Space. Artifort 'Suit' dining chairs, Ke-Zu.

Styling by Kate Nixon and Nicholas Bryan-Brown (42), Amy Spargo (43), Jack Milenkovic (44, 45).
Photography by Maree Homer (42), Martina Gemmola (43), Pablo Veiga (44), Anson Smart (45).





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Materials

These spaces are vastly different, yet they all combine textures and finishes harmoniously to create an alluring atmosphere. We'd love to step into each of these rooms and touch every surface – they're all so evocative.



46 GREG NATALE

Greg Natale

This dazzling primary suite is a masterclass in material selection. The well-travelled owners tasked Greg Natale and his team to create a space that would reflect their creative and global sensibilities. "They were particularly inspired by the eclecticism of Parisian restaurants and their maximalist interiors," he shares. Verde Alpi marble defines transitions, high-lacquered joinery provides an exciting contrast in surface finishes, and cherry blossom wallpaper adds a feminine foil to the masculine stone choice. gregnatale.com

ROOM NOTES Walls, ceiling and joinery in Benjamin Moore Southwest Pottery. Bedroom wall in Iksel 'White Blossom' wallpaper. Robe partitions, portal and steps in Verde Alpi marble; benchtops and bedroom portal (opposite) in Calacatta Viola marble, all Mondo Marmo Design. Robe drawers in Alpi Walnut Burl.

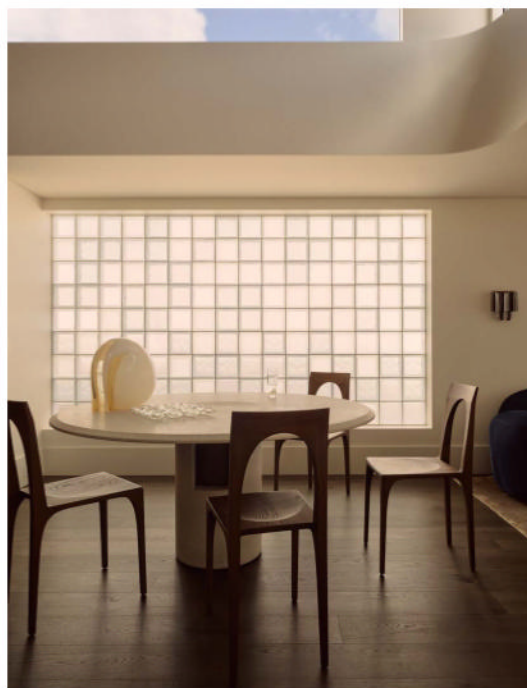


47 MARYLOU SOBEL

Marylou Sobel

A tasteful mix of neutral selections creates a cohesive, elevated palette in this city dwelling. "The brief for this heritage project was to reimagine the apartment as a calm, light-filled sanctuary. A space to retreat to during the work week with all the ease, elegance and warmth of a true home," says Marylou. A chic upholstered banquette offers informal seating in the kitchen, cocooned by ivory sheer curtains, and offering views into a beautifully manicured garden and across the cityscape beyond. marylousobel.com.au.

ROOM NOTES Walls and joinery painted Dulux Natural White Quarter. Curtain in Raffles 'Exquiste' linen blend in Ivory. Visual Comfort E.F.Chapman 'Boston' double library wall light in hand-rubbed Antique Brass, Bloomingdales.

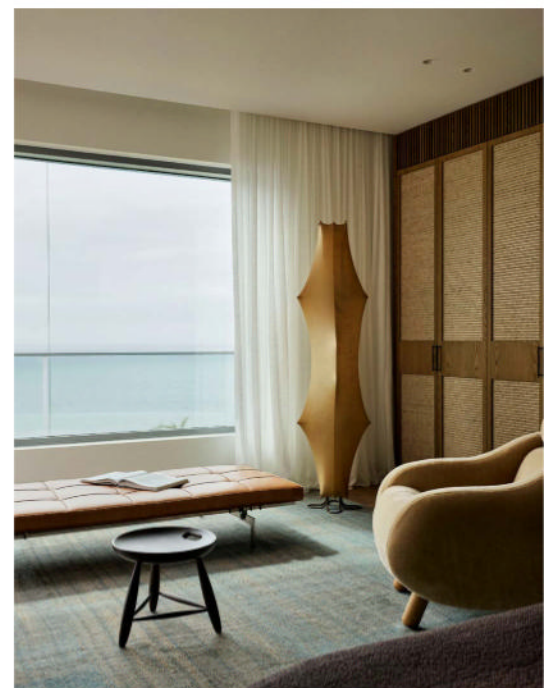


48 SMAC STUDIO

Shona McElroy

"This space reflects the evolution of our studio's design language," says Shona. "It layers diverse styles, materials and historical references – from Art-Deco motifs in the joinery to '70s glass block windows and Mid-century chairs by Atmosphaera." The standout inclusion that caught our eye in this room was the wall of iconic glass bricks, which allows in natural light while providing privacy, and introduces geometric lines to create a sense of calm and order. The natural woodgrain of the flooring provides a warm counterbalance. smacstudio.com.au.

ROOM NOTES Walls painted Dulux Natural White. Custom glass blocks by Smac Studio, Obeco Glass. 'Alba' dining table and 'Gio' chairs by Paolo Castelli, Atmosphaera. Gino Vistosi 'Munega' table lamp, 506070. Engineered timber flooring in Ardesia, Tongue & Groove.



49 DECUS

Alexandra Donohoe Church

This primary suite was planned to embrace the dawn over the ocean, with sunrise tones complemented by the warmth of textured grasscloth, timber joinery and sheer linen. The cocooning atmosphere is intimate and serene thanks to the material selection, with velvet upholstery and oak joinery inlaid with textured grasscloth adding refined finishing touches, along with an ocean-hued Cadrys rug that echoes the view. "A favourite moment, the sensual, pleated leather bedhead, tailored to fold in brass lighting and floating side tables," says Alexandra. decus.com.

ROOM NOTES Walls painted Porter's Paints Popcorn. Joinery in American oak with Phillip Jeffries 'Totally Tatami' grasscloth in Rice Straw. Curtains, Simple Studio. Flos lamp, Studio Gardner. Fritz Hansen daybed, Cult. Aurélien Serre armchair, Moebel. LinBrasil stool, Mama Casa. Rug, Cadrys.

WINNER
Best Use of
Materials

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WELCOME HOME

Styling by Kirsten Bookallil (47), Jack Milenkovic (48), Joseph Gardner (49), Kate Nixon (50).
Photography by Anson Smart (47, 49), Dave Wheeler (48), Maree Homer (50).



50 KATE NIXON

Kate Nixon

The soft swirling movement of Merlin quartzite, textural depth of limewashed walls and the reflection of Flemish cathedral glass all work in harmony to create a room with layers of intricate detail and warmth. "The interior design of this formal meeting room masterfully combines intimacy with refined sophistication," says Kate. "The space exudes a calm, tactile ambiance that immediately grounds and comforts." katenixon.com.

ROOM NOTES Walls limewashed in Bauwerk Colour. Marble cabinet in Merlin quartzite from Worldstone, made by Kreative Kitchens. Wall mouldings, Intrim. Table, Boucher & Co. Chair, Fanuli. Lamp, Sarah Nedovic. Chevron flooring, Eco Outdoor.

Rising Star

With a focus on personalised, timeless spaces tailored to individual needs, this Sydney architecture and interiors studio stood out for its balance of innovation and tradition, bringing calm and cohesion to its work.



MICHIRU HIGGINBOTHAM

Michiru Cohen and Adam Higginbotham

The *H&G* panel was won over by this duo's design approach: "blending the Australian spirit of openness and the Japanese reverence for simplicity". In this featured room, a family of four were fast outgrowing their Art-Deco home and tasked Michiru and Adam with its redesign. The creation of two distinct zones – an adult retreat and a teenage hangout – offered privacy and independence for all. "We find with family clients like this, both parents are working and juggling life around kids," says Adam. "They have very little time, and anything outside the house is pretty hectic. In this case, the house needed to be serene." Working to a pared-back palette of warm timber, Taj Mahal quartzite and soft neutrals, the pair drew inspiration from 1920s and '30s cruise liners, offering a sense of escape.

michiruhigginbotham.com.au.

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Rising
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Houses

CHARMING INTERIORS FULL OF PERSONALITY

Styling by Olga Lewis. Photograph by Tom Ferguson. Calligraphy by Lesley Workman.

Two thriving elkhorns (*Platycerium bifurcatum*) overlook the courtyard of artist Ebony Russell. Paving in Bowral Bricks 'Hamlet' bricks in Sepia from Brickworks ground the space. Turn the page for the full house tour.

DINING Wall light and ceramics by Ebony Russell, Piped Dream Studio. Artwork by Tjukupati James. Vintage coffee table made by Gerard Havekes. Bowral Bricks 'Hamlet' brick flooring in Sepia, Brickworks. **FACADE** Trims painted Dulux Colorbond Manor Red.

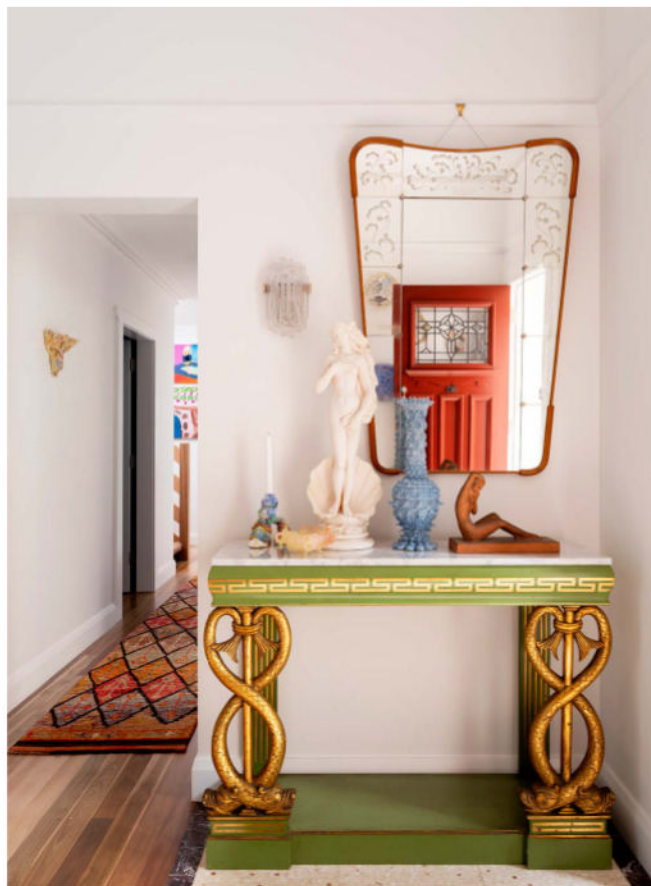


Artist in RESIDENCE



Handmade treasures, rich colours and robust finishes speak volumes in the inner-city family home of a ceramicist.

STORY *Karen Spresser* | STYLING *Olga Lewis* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Tom Ferguson*



Colour, texture and whimsy are woven into this California bungalow in Sydney's Inner West. Home to Ebony and Sean Russell and their two children, the spaces are eclectic and thoughtful, with a mix of materials and new and vintage pieces. Ebony, a ceramicist, has layered art throughout, including some of her own beautiful pieces. The family bought the house in 2019, with the intention to renovate. "It was definitely a fixer-upper," says Ebony. "It was liveable, but it was not in any way comfortable."

The renovations started later than they had hoped - with lockdowns forcing them to wait - but in 2022 they asked architect Mark Szczerbicki, of Mark Szczerbicki Design Studio, to undertake the project. "I previously designed the neighbours' extension, which they really liked," says

Mark. "When they became friendly with the neighbours, that's how they found me."

The original three-bedroom home was "a bit of a squeeze for four humans, two cats and Ebony's art practice". The kitchen was in one of the bedrooms and everything was separated from the big backyard by a "ramshackle" shed at the back.

The initial brief was straightforward, with generous bedrooms for the children and a shared bathroom top priorities.

Ebony and Sean wanted to retain as much of the original character of the house as possible, with the facade remaining. The brief also included an art studio with kiln for Ebony's practice and space for the couple's art collection.

"We wanted a house that had two bedrooms for our daughters and a nice space for me and Sean - a parents' retreat with a bedroom, walk-in robe, ensuite and an office for Sean. We wanted it to

feel like a section of the house that was an adult zone," says Ebony. "And to then have a hidden extension at the back that gave us all the mod cons."

The extension houses living, dining and kitchen spaces, connected but not all open-plan, with areas for entertaining and family gatherings. "We wanted the TV to be in a separate area - so the family and entertaining area was based around conversation," says Ebony. The television can be found in the rumpus room/library.

The renovation was a collaboration, with Mark, Ebony, Sean and Ebony's good friend, designer Anna Dance, all involved.

"While we did the architecture, Anna and Ebony drove the interior design process," says Mark. "We did the base design for the joinery, the layout and so on. Colours, materials and finishes were chosen by Ebony and Anna, then we oversaw the construction of it." ►

ENTRY Front door painted Dulux Colorbond Manor Red. Console, Eyespy Collective. Mirror, Virtanen Antiques & Modern. **DINING** *Opposite* Vintage table, chairs and rug. Joinery in Dulux Colorbond Manor Red and Elton Group Evenex Tuscan Oak. Bowral Bricks 'Hamlet' flooring in Sepia, Brickworks.

“In terms of the style of the house, I wanted
rich textures and layered surfaces.”

EBONY RUSSELL, ARTIST & OWNER



The windows and cladding on the extension were Sean's area of expertise, having worked in the field for many years. "That was what he was passionate about, and the project uses a type of top-hung door in the living and dining area, which was a new product at the time," says Mark.

With the interiors, Anna, who lives in Brisbane, made a few visits to Sydney where she and Ebony would go on "reconnaissance missions". "Anna knew me so well and she shared my aesthetic,"

says Ebony. "But also wasn't scared to take on all these different surfaces and have fun with that."

"I'm in no way a beige sort of person - I'm a maximalist. When it came to choosing all the things for the house, I relied on Anna to help me navigate that. In terms of the style of the house, I wanted rich textures and layered surfaces."

When the family first moved in, Ebony had worked from a building at the back of the property. Now, she says, "it's a

privilege to get to have a studio at home which isn't a bench in the laundry or the lean-to at the back of the house. My practice with ceramics is time pressured, so I need access to my work 24 hours a day to continue the layers. The studio at home has been amazing." ▶

Mark Szczerbicki Design Studio:
markszczerbicki.com.

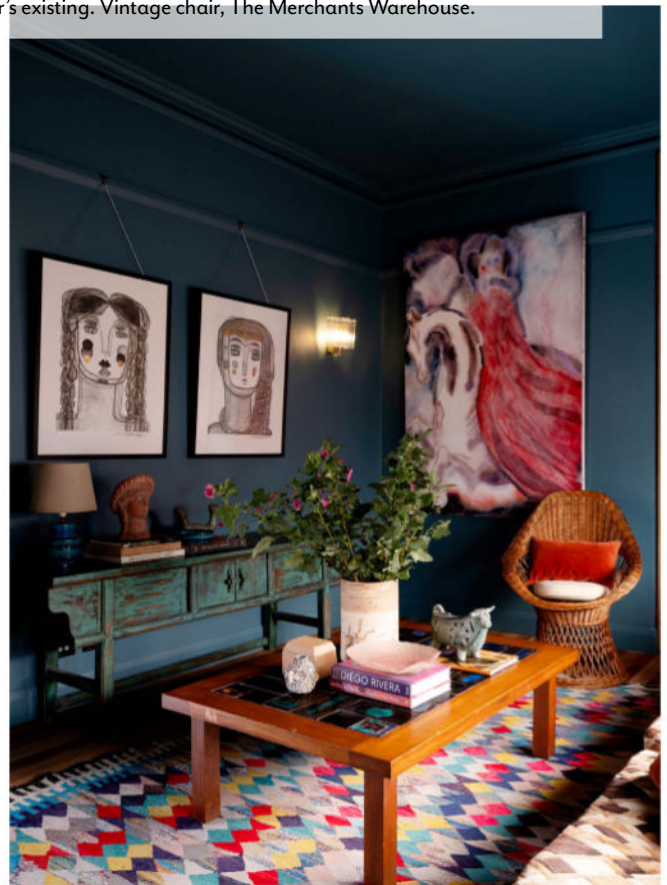
Miso Building: misobuilding.com.au.

Ebony Russell:
martinbrownecontemporary.com.



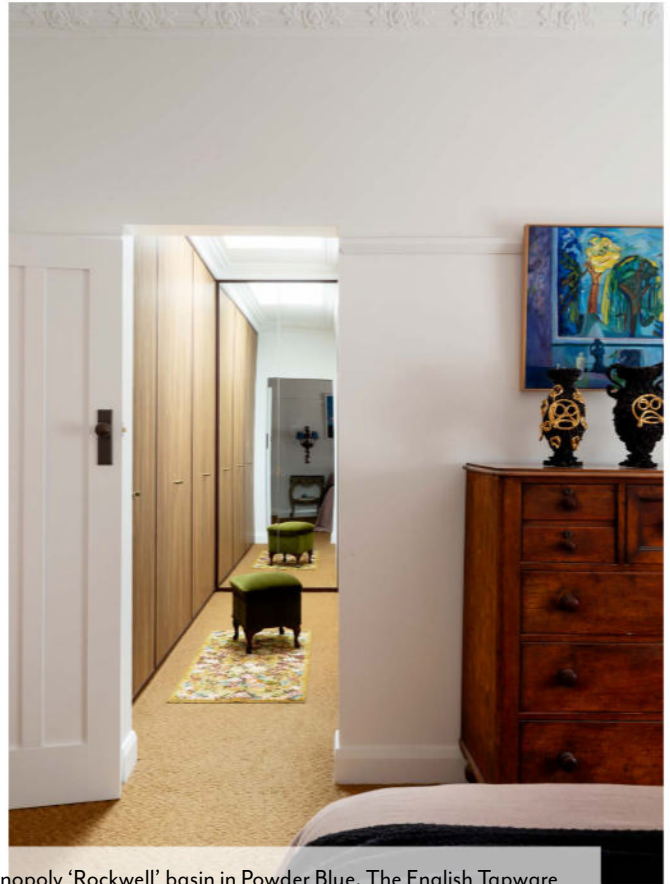


DINING/KITCHEN Artwork by Madeleine Cruise. Splashback and benchtop tiles, Artedomus. Joinery in Elton Group Evenex Tuscan Oak. Floors in Bowral Bricks 'Hamlet' brick in Sepia, Brickworks. **PANTRY** Joinery in Laminex Moroccan Clay. Tapware, ABI Interiors. **FORMAL LIVING** Artwork by Anna Mould. Etches, owner's existing. Vintage chair, The Merchants Warehouse.





POWDER ROOM Rosso Levanto tiles, Di Lorenzo. The Water Monopoly 'Rockwell' basin in Powder Blue, The English Tapware Company. Sculpture by Sassy Park. **ROBE** Joinery in Elton Group Evenex Tuscan Oak. Artwork by Madeleine Cruise. 'Sienna' carpet, Bremworth. **STUDIO** Ebony in her studio. **BEDROOM** Bed linen, Kip&Co. Locker, Mustard Made. Artwork by owners' daughter. **MAIN BEDROOM** *Opposite* Bed linen, The Bespoke Linen Co. Artworks by Deborah Paauwe, Sassy Park and Ebony Russell.



“I’m in no way a beige sort of person – I’m a maximalist.”

EBONY RUSSELL, ARTIST & OWNER



THE PALETTE

Dulux Lexicon Quarter
(living)

Dulux Sea Deep
(formal living)

Dulux Colorbond Manor Red
(exterior & joinery trims)

ALFRESCO Exterior in
Colorbond Manor Red,
Valmond & Gibson. Outdoor
sofa, MCM House. Coffee
table, Temple & Webster.

THIS IS THE LIFE

Ebony says one of the joys of the renovation was the relationship they built with their architect and their builder. "It was phenomenal," she says. Favourite rooms? "We love so much about the house that I'd find it hard to choose just one," says Ebony. "I love the butler's pantry because it's such a small space, but it's so rich with the chequered terrazzo tiled floor and deep terracotta walls."



1

THE SOURCE

For maximum visual impact and warmth, artfully layer textures and finishes in rich hues.



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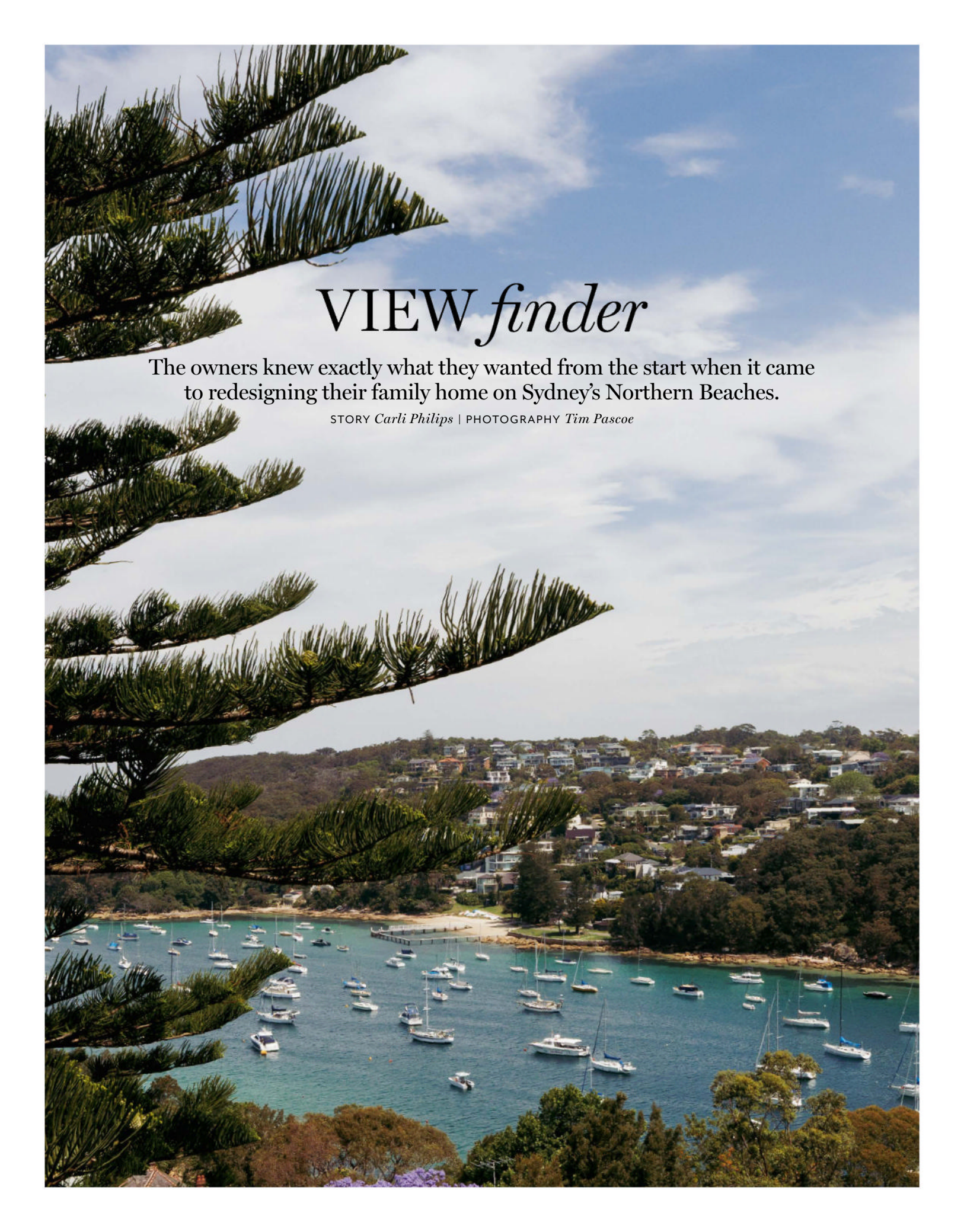


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1 19th-century gilt gesso Neo-Rococo **mirror**, \$3850, The Vault Sydney. 2 The Water Monopoly 'Rockwell' **basin** in Powder Blue, POA, The English Tapware Company. 3 Aerin 'Mollino' tiered **chandelier**, \$2490, The Montauk Lighting Co. 4 Antique Caucasian Shirvan kilim **rug**, \$7900, Cadrys. 5 Maiden framed canvas **art print**, \$74.95, Olive et Oriel. 6 Atlas **sculpture** by Kerryn Levy, POA, Curatorial+Co. 7 'Bambury' linen **coverlet** in Pebble, \$649, Freedom. 8 Ceramic tiled **coffee table**, \$3068, Bazaa. 9 Hand-painted porcelain **wall plate**, \$302.25, Etsy. 10 Gubi 'Grace' **lounge chair**, \$4499, Bodhi Living. **H&G**

A scenic view of a coastal town and harbor, framed by a pine branch in the foreground. The town is built on a hillside overlooking a harbor filled with numerous sailboats. The sky is blue with scattered clouds.

VIEW *finder*

The owners knew exactly what they wanted from the start when it came to redesigning their family home on Sydney's Northern Beaches.

STORY *Carli Philips* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Tim Pascoe*



POOL AREA Pool installed by Upstairs Design & Building Co. Aluminium cladding, Sitka Roof & Cladding. Balustrades and railings, Codmac Engineering. 'Venice' pool tiles, Leyla Mosaic. 'Chateau' pavers, Di Lorenzo. **VIEW** The incredible vantage point from the home takes in Forty Baskets Beach and more.

Solid ideas, confidence and hard work were key to the build and design of this family home on Sydney's Northern Beaches. Owners Annie and John bought a block with a 1920s gentleman's residence and a long yard they split in two, selling off the original house and building their own home at the rear, a process that took three years.

Annie's vision was for something "coastal, modern and timeless with solid,

natural, earthy textures". Annie says, "Every detail was researched during the design phase to achieve what we were going for - simple, elegant and considered.

"We were confident, and it has very much turned out how we first envisaged. I was a tiny bit wobbly at first but let go of those fears early on when John said, 'go for it, do what you like, I trust you - just don't tell me how much it costs!'"

Given their own research and aesthetic clarity, Annie and John opted not to go ▶

KITCHEN Joinery in Polytec Black Woodmatt and Steccawood. Overhead joinery in Briggs Veneers TrueGrain Spotted Gum. Benchtop and island in Viscount White granite, Marable. Basin and mixer, Appliances Online. Barstools, Feelgood Designs. Linear pendant, Urban Lighting. Spotted gum flooring, Aus Timber.

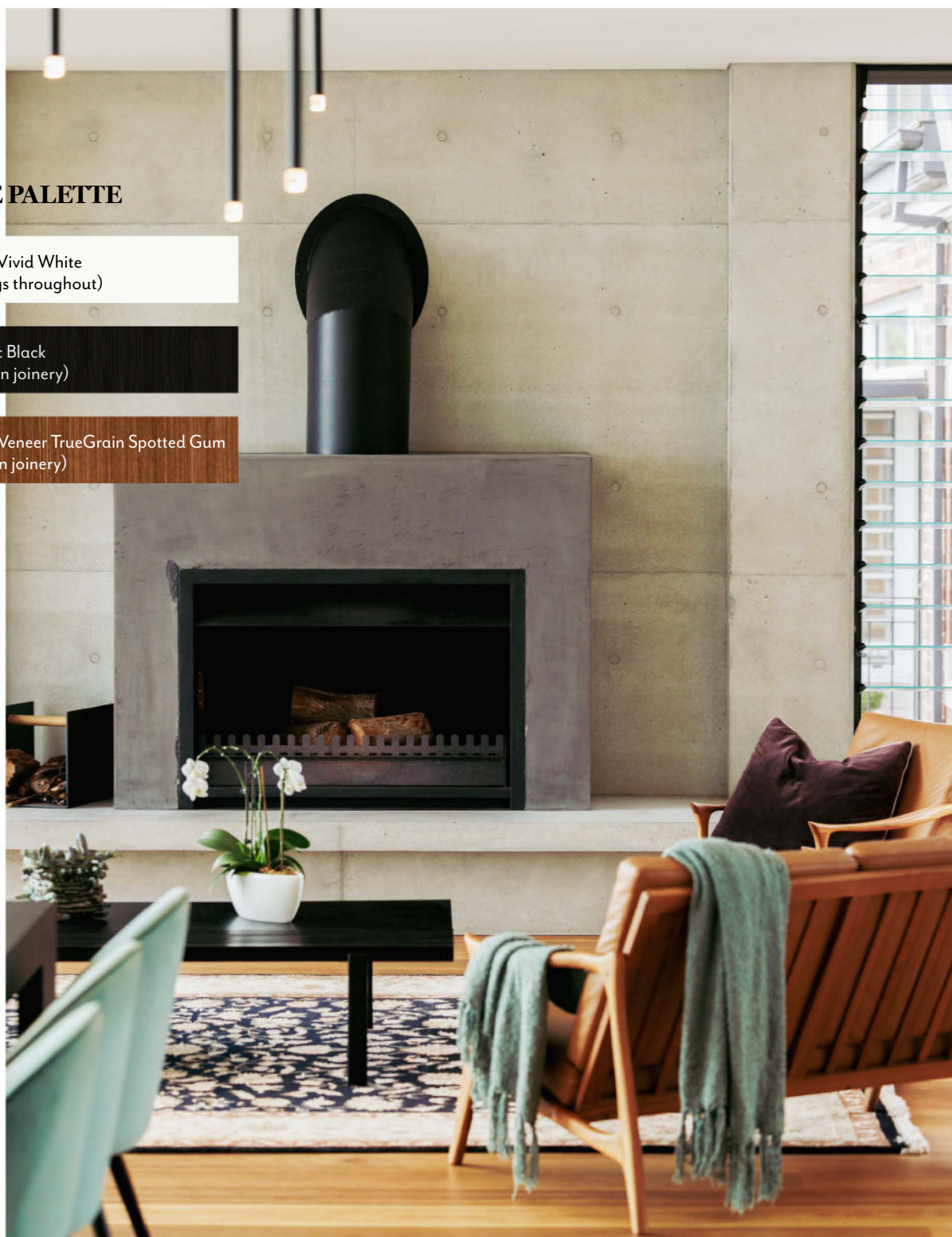


THE PALETTE

Dulux Vivid White
(ceilings throughout)

Polytec Black
(kitchen joinery)

Briggs Veneer TrueGrain Spotted Gum
(kitchen joinery)



DOWNSTAIRS LIVING Dining chairs, James Said. Pendant lights, Urban Lighting. Armchairs, Domayne. Coffee Table, Nick Scali. Fireplace, Jetmaster. **LANDING** *Opposite* Wall and shelf in Hymix concrete. Ceramic owl by Nina Matthewson. **KITCHEN** Overhead joinery in Briggs Veneers TrueGrain Spotted Gum. Joinery in Polytec Black Woodmatt and Steccawood. Benchtop and island in Viscount White granite, Marable. Spotted gum flooring, Aus Timber. **KITCHEN SHELF** Splashback in clear toughened insulated glass. Ceramics crafted by the owner. **EXTERIOR** Barrimah stone walling, Eco Outdoor. Spotted gum decking, Barrenjoey Timber. Native pigface (*Carpobrotus rossii*) cascades down from the rooftop garden. Morgan & Finch outdoor cushions, Bed Bath N' Table.

“Annie knew what she wanted and the style she liked. Our role was to help make her ideas a reality.” STUART KELMAN, BUILDER



MAIN BEDROOM Chair and ottoman by Yuzuru Yamakawa, Feelgood Designs. Curtains in Zepel 'Selene' in Linen, ABSOL. 'Neo' bed in Preston velvet in Moss, King Living. Table lamps, Magnolia Home. Audo Copenhagen lamp. Peony botanical prints, La Grolla. Bed linen, Bed Bath N' Table. 'Waratah' cushion, Freedom. 'Untouched' carpet in Placid, Bremworth.



with an architect, instead backing themselves and their builder, Stuart Kelman from Upstairs Design & Building Co, who had worked on projects in the area. “Annie knew what she wanted and the style she liked. Our role was to help make her ideas reality,” says Stuart.

From the entrance, the house opens into a foyer with a study off to the side. The L-shaped floorplan consists of a long, wide, glass hallway that turns a corner into the kitchen, dining and living area, which surrounds a river-rock style pool and garden by landscape designer Tania Landsdorff of StudioPlum, a good friend of Annie’s. “The plants are predominantly Australian natives. They are lush and healthy, it’s magical,” says Annie.

Originally, the concept was for a spiral staircase to the first floor, but the idea was scrapped as “it was taking up a lot of real estate downstairs,” says Stuart. Instead, the stairs were moved to the butler’s pantry where they lead to the main suite, kids’ bedrooms and a “snug” – as Annie calls it. “It’s a place we go to unwind, relax and snuggle up to watch TV.”

For the interiors, Annie and John engaged Kelly Pearson, who drew up the bathrooms, solid wooden door jamb details and slender joinery profiles. To achieve a streamlined look, hardware details have been minimised and the windows, recessed into off-form concrete columns, allowing the glass to reach right to the top of the ceiling.

The kitchen stone, one oversized piece of Viscount White leathered granite, was one of the first materials selected. “We visited a lot of places, looking for just the right piece; large, strong, not too refined and beautiful to touch. Everything else was specified to complement the granite,” says Annie. “The view is stunning from here,” she adds of the kitchen. “We’re so lucky – we’re living in our dream.” ▶

Upstairs Design & Building Co:
upstairsdesign.com.au.

Kelly Pearson: @kelly_pearson_design.
StudioPlum: studioplum.com.au.

OUTDOORS Franco fan, Fans Online. 'Livorno' sofas in Taupe/Anthracite, both GlobeWest. Cushions, Pillow Talk. EcoSmart Ethanol fire table, Outdoor Elegance.

THIS IS THE LIFE

"John loves watching the Manly ferries cross the harbour and I love lounging in the cabana," says Annie. "The winds often roar off the ocean through the harbour up towards us so having a sheltered outdoor living area has worked brilliantly. You can be in the pool or cabana and still see the view through the large glass panels of the inside living area all year round."





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THE SOURCE

Natural earthy textures and colours conjure a simple but elegant coastal style.

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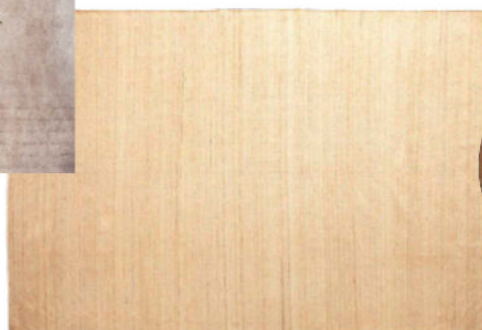
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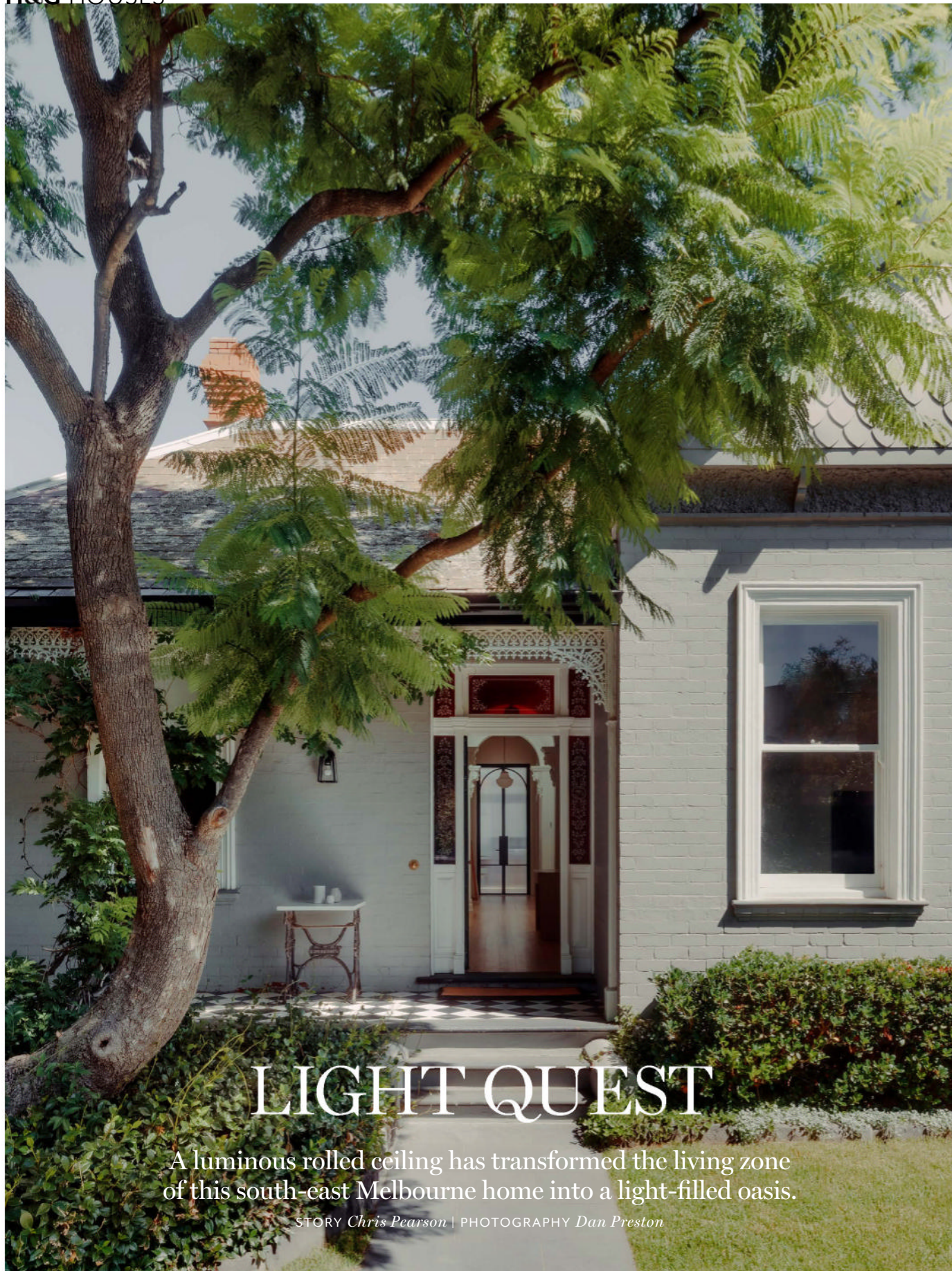
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1 'Halcyon Accent' **table lamp**, \$3690, The Montauk Lighting Co. 2 *Silybum Marianum* / limited edition **photograph** by David Crosby, \$9234, Saatchi Art. 3 'Jane II' **wall sconce**, \$684, Creative Lighting Solutions. 4 Hanson 'Coral' **vase** in Crema, \$90, GlobeWest. 5 Highback **chair** in Black Rattan, \$866, Feelgood Designs. 6 Nanimarquina 'Nomad' natural **rug**, \$4160, Cult. 7 'Whittier' **wall mirror**, \$789, Freedom. 8 Organic cotton **duvet cover** in Mulberry, \$269, Città. 9 Baxter 'Himba' **sofa**, POA, Space. 10 Australian House & Garden 'Norwood' **throw** in Eucalyptus, \$199.95, Myer. **H&G**



LIGHT QUEST

A luminous rolled ceiling has transformed the living zone of this south-east Melbourne home into a light-filled oasis.

STORY *Chris Pearson* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Dan Preston*



HALLWAY Walls painted Resene White Pointer Half. Artwork by Ash Keating. PP Møbler 'Flag Halyard' chair and Innolux 'Lisa' lamp, both Great Dane. Pendant light, owners' existing. Steel-framed doors, Melbourne Iron & Steel. **FACADE** Walls painted Taubmans Foxdale. Trim in Resene White Pointer Half.

With its soaring ceilings reaching for the sky, this four-bedroom home in Melbourne's south-east, designed by Lachlan McArdle of Lande Architects, has an almost spiritual quality for its owners, Olivia and Craig. But, while the cloud-like curved forms overhead are ethereal, they were the smart solution to a more earth-bound problem.

When the couple bought the double-fronted Edwardian bungalow in 2016 for them and their daughter, Rose, now 12, they loved the traditional features. But the yellow walls, worn carpet and a 1970s rear addition, with its skinny living room and rundown kitchen, had much less appeal. And, most pointedly, as the open plan faced south, it was deprived of natural light. So, in 2024, they called in Lachlan and colleague Ellie Spinks to remedy its faults. And, like the curate's egg, the architects found it good in parts.

"The clients had done a tasteful rejuvenation of the original home and it presented incredibly well. It just had shortcomings when it came to the main living spaces," says Lachlan. ►

LIVING Walls painted Resene White Pointer Half. 'Valley' sofa and 'August' coffee table, both Jordan. Molteni & C 'Glove Up' armchair, Hub. Rug, Halcyon Lake. **KITCHEN/DINING** V-Zug appliances, Winnings. Muuto 'Strand' pendant lights, Living Edge. 'Johansen' dining table and 'Møller 77' dining chairs, all Great Dane. Artworks by Greg Wood. Ceramics, Pépité. Engineered timber flooring in White Smoked, Woodcut.





KITCHEN Joinery in Resene Ash, TT Cabinets + Design. Benchtop in Grigio Orsola marble, Artedomus. Kitchen mixer in Aged Brass, Astra Walker. V-Zug appliances, Winnings. Muuto 'Strand' pendant lights, Living Edge. Artworks by Greg Wood. 'Johansen' dining table and 'Møller 77' chairs, all Great Dane. Ceramics, Pépité.





“The rolled ceilings welcome the light and give visual relief and connection to the sky.”

LACHLAN McARDLE, ARCHITECT

DINING Muuto 'Strand' pendant lights, Living Edge. 'Johansen' oak dining table and 'Møller 77' oak dining chairs, all Great Dane. Molteni & C 'Glove Up' armchair, Hub. 'Giverny Oushak 43' rug, Halcyon Lake. Engineered timber flooring in White Smoked, Woodcut. **EXTERIOR** Walls painted Resene White Pointer Half. Original walls painted Taubmans Foxdale. Garonne limestone paving, Eco Outdoor.





“The brief was to make the main living spaces more suited to the family’s lifestyle (they love entertaining) while being respectful to the original house. Key to that was a more confident addition. It was to be relaxed, but also able to handle pool parties and barbecues with ease.” But, in the search for natural light, there was a major hurdle, a three-storey block of flats next door.

“While we wanted to open the living areas to the north, we also wanted to avoid looking at the flats and vice versa. The need for daylight, and the opposing desire for privacy, were the trickiest aspects,” he says. He ingeniously solved this by giving the new addition a double sawtooth roof that welcomes the light from the north while keeping roving eyes at bay. The result is a luminous, airy open-plan space that draws the eye skywards. “The rolled ceilings scoop up the light and give visual relief and connection to the sky,” says Lachlan.

“Clean, minimal and sensitive to the original home, the extension draws on Mid-century modernism,” says Lachlan. “Serene and clutter-free, its direct connection to the outdoors on both sides fills the space with light and air, and a feeling of wellbeing.”

But, he adds, it also has an air of cosy familiarity. “We wanted materials familiar to the original house, so brick, timber and stone were the heavy lifters,” says Lachlan. “We bagged and painted recycled bricks to give a softness to the columns supporting the sculptural roof. These textured pillars make the vast expanses above feel more intimate.”

Copious curves also take their cue from the front section and formed part of the brief. “We wanted curves to flow from the existing arches in the wide hallway,” says Craig. “Lachlan brought this into the huge bowed skylights, curved island bench and the pool fence posts.” And they are reprised in the steel-framed doors with fluted glass that form the threshold between old and new.

In this oasis of calm, warm caramel timber tones, off-whites, muted greys and subtle greens predominate. Meanwhile, an oversized Jordan modular sofa and 10-seater dining table from Great Dane revel in the volume and give it more human scale, and a statement Hans Wegner ‘Flag Halyard’ chair grounds the space when viewed from the hallway.

“The indoor-outdoor living area – with its natural light, huge sliding doors on both sides and natural warm tones – feels amazing to walk into,” says Craig, who’s clearly rapt in his new home. “I love the feeling of sitting in that living space,” adds Lachlan. “Two seemingly conflicting ideas – cosiness and openness – come together beautifully. Somehow you feel part of the dining and kitchen spaces while sitting on the lounge, yet you’re surrounded by light and garden. It’s a hard quality to explain, but one that leaves you feeling relaxed, secure and connected all at once.” ►

Lande Architects: lande.com.au.

THIS IS THE LIFE

This home is a chameleon, a cosy family home one minute and the great entertainer the next, when the expansive sliders on both sides are fully open, connecting to the garden and pool. While the open plan is the focus of family activity at all hours of the day, when Craig, Olivia and Rose want a little me-time, they can retreat to the more enclosed original section of the home.



PATIO Outdoor setting, owners' existing. Exterior walls on extension painted Resene White Pointer Half. Original walls painted Taubmans Foxdale. Garonne limestone paving, Eco Outdoor.



THE PALETTE

Taubmans Foxdale
(exterior)

Resene White Pointer Half
(hallway & exterior extension)

Grigio Orsola marble
(stone surfaces)

“We wanted materials familiar to the original house, so brick, timber and stone were the heavy lifters.”

LACHLAN McARDLE, ARCHITECT

MAIN BATHROOM Walls in Novacolor Marmorino KS Venetian plaster. Joinery, TT Cabinets + Design. Benchtop, bath surround and floor tiles in Grigio Orsola marble, Artedomus. Towel rail, tapware and shower in Aged Brass, Astra Walker. Towels, Loom Towels.



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THE SOURCE

A nature-inspired palette introduces calm and balance with muted tones that don't compete for attention.

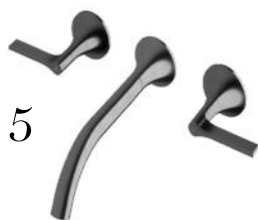
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1 'Pallas' vase, \$574.40, Iittala. 2 'Casey' storage ottoman in Fam Green, \$699, OZ Design. 3 'Karra' outdoor rug in Grey, \$399, Freedom. 4 Evendon II print, \$74.95, Olive et Oriel. 5 Milli 'Oria' wall basin set in Brushed Gunmetal, \$983, Reece. 6 Juniper 'Mae' cushion in Laurel, \$160, GlobeWest. 7 Suzanne Kasler 'Elliot' large pendant light in Portland Grey, \$2290, The Montauk Lighting Co. 8 Rina Menardi 'Fiori' bowl, POA, Fanuli. 9 'Leonard' occasional chair, \$1995, Few and Far. 10 'Astra' entertainment unit in Natural, \$999, Harvey Norman. **H&G**

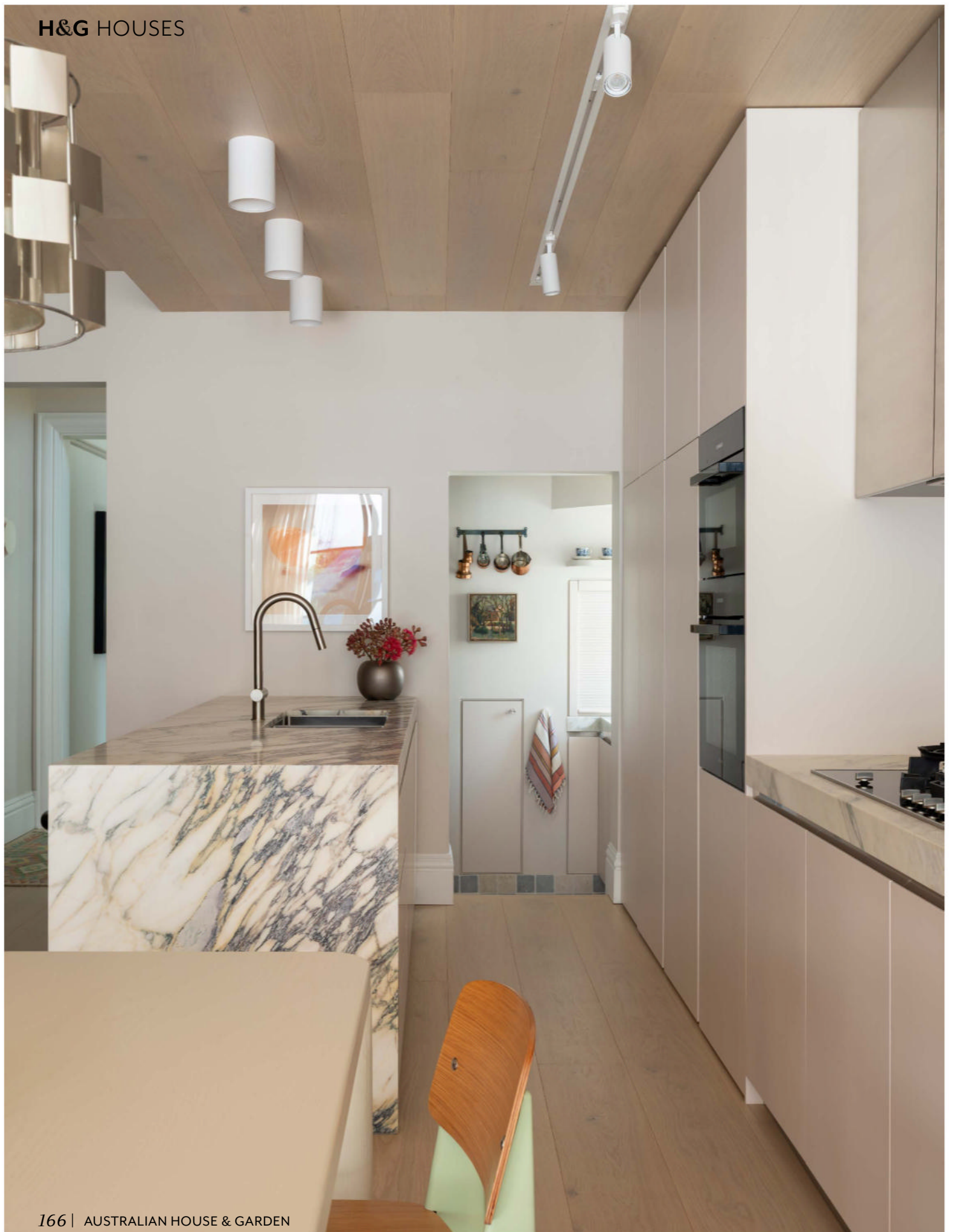


Verdant refresh

A rundown Sydney terrace is transformed into a neighbourhood delight, and aptly given the nickname The Peppermint Garden House.

STORY *Eliza O'Hare* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Tom Ferguson*

HALLWAY Walls painted Dulux Parchment Paper Half. Trims painted Dulux Natural White. Front door painted Dulux Frontier Fort. Herman Miller pendant light, Living Edge. Anthony Bourdain portrait by Chico Crisobal. Wall light, Fineworks Paddington. Vintage kilim rug. Oak flooring in Grand Ville, Woodcut. **FACADE** Painted Dulux Natural White and Dulux French Limestone. Ferm Living pendant light, Luumo Design. Outdoor bench, Fermob. Missoni cushions, Winnings. Lilly pilly (*Syzygium 'Cascade'*) hedges, climbing Madagascar jasmine (*Stephanotis floribunda*), crepe myrtle (*Lagerstroemia indica x fauriei 'Tuscarora'*) on the verge. Mosaic floor tiles, Tessellated Tile Factory.



Dean and Olga are perpetual flippers. Together they have formed interior design studio Studio Zdjelar. Dean, who was an interior designer for many years, spotted a gap in the market and now specialises in all forms of carpentry and joinery. He brings the structure and attention to detail, while Olga, whose career in fashion with big Australian labels including Zimmermann, brings the colour, nuance and precious pieces to their projects. Their latest conquest - a rundown, ornate 1910 terrace in Sydney's Eastern Suburbs - brings together all the elements of their shared experiences.

When Dean first saw the house, he did one walk-through and was straight on the phone to Olga, declaring, "We're buying it! I've already designed it!". His immediate plan was to open it all up and add a showstopping vertical garden that would be visible from the moment you open the front door. "I like focal points - I need a hero, man! When you walk into a space you've got a depth of vision and I like to put something on that very far, far wall to give you a target to walk towards," he says.

It really is a dramatic reveal from the front porch, showing a confidence that this is not their first rodeo. A series of collaborative house projects and transformations have led to this latest home. The neighbourhood took an immediate interest in the new occupants of the rundown corner house and their inspired candy-coloured paint choices, dubbing it The Peppermint Garden House, which thrilled the couple.

"This is what we like to do. We like to buy something ugly - as long as it's unique - and have a lot of fun with it," says Dean. "We don't do white and we're always trying to grow in each design that we do and find the challenge in it." ▶

KITCHEN Walls and joinery painted Dulux Parchment Paper. Overhead joinery painted Dulux Stainless Steel. Benchtop in Calacatta Monet marble. Tapware and Miele appliances, Winnings. Track lighting, LED World. Can lights, Havit. Artwork by Alina Trifan. Vintage artwork, owners' existing.

DINING Max Sauze vintage pendant light, Miguel Meirelles Antiques. French oak flooring in Grand Ville, Woodcut. Dining table, GlobeWest. Dining chairs, Studio Alm. Side table, Anibou.

LIVING Of Greek and Yeoman artwork by George Raftopoulos. Curtains in Warwick Fabrics 'Whisper Eucalyptus'. Nemo mini 'Lampe De Marseille' in White Wash, Cult. Ligne Roset 'Togo' sofa, Domo. Fogia 'Tabula' side table, Fred International. Side table and 'Rocket' stool, Anibou. Vintage Thonet stool. Rug, Armadillo.



**THIS IS
THE LIFE**

This corner terrace is the fourth project for Dean and Olga. A vertical garden is a signature move for the designer/builder duo, who designed and built the studio/garage and garden with seasonal planting in mind. The green wall provides a beautiful backdrop for the open indoor-outdoor entertaining zone, perfect for hosting friends and family year-round.





“The bathroom is a little bit dramatic and fun – it’s memorable.”

DEAN ZDJELAR, BUILDER/DESIGNER & OWNER

That sense of fun is obvious from the outset, with the space between the garage and the house transformed into a lush expanse, thanks to a verdant, vertical garden. Stepping stones lead toward the pink terracotta glow of the kitchen and its warm welcoming buzz.

The vertical garden is a signature move from Dean. “I think they’re fantastic. They’re kind of like murals that change on a daily basis with flowers and foliage appearing and disappearing. We think colour’s really important, so there are pops of red, mustard, black and different variations of green. And there’s also texture from the long grasses to the succulents.”

The first internal challenge was creating a bathroom on the ground floor. “The bathroom is a little bit dramatic and fun - it’s memorable,” he says, about turning the existing main living room of the house into a guest bathroom. It’s huge - it has its own fireplace and is home to Olga’s beautifully curated collection of West German ceramics.

The kitchen gives semi-professional vibes with a long galley set-up featuring a gas cooktop. The stairs were flipped, allowing for a larder underneath - now filled with Olga’s treasured artisanal fish plates, copper pots and pans. The whole room is tied together with a gorgeous fireplace that works as an anchor in the room. ►

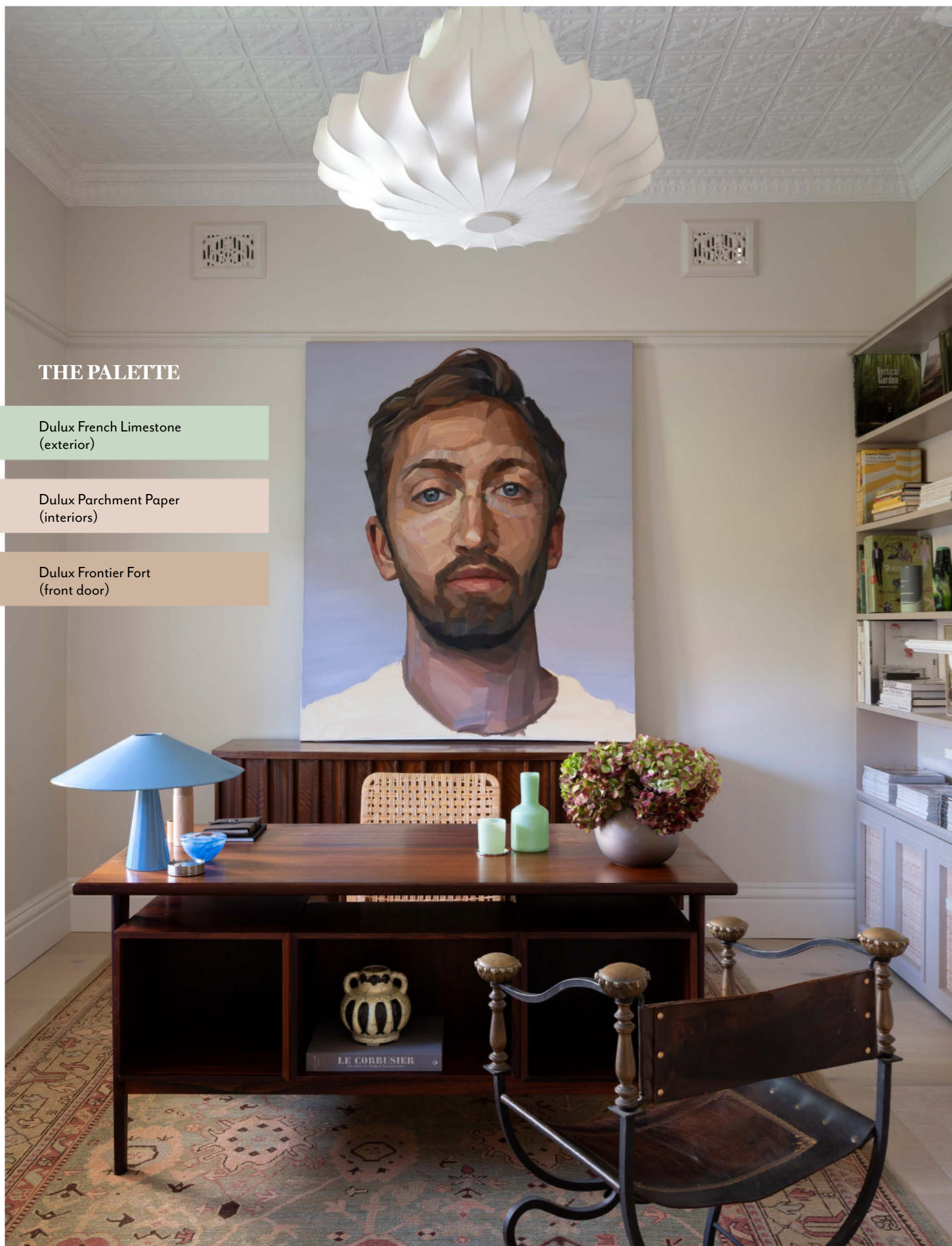
BACKYARD Slate roof, Sydney Roofing Company. Concrete banquette and vertical garden, both Studio Zdjelar. Banquette seat in Sunbrella ‘Palma’ fabric in Sage and White. Missoni cushions and BeefEater ‘Signature Proline’ barbecue, all Winnings. Coffee table, GlobeWest. Serralunga ‘Cero’ stools in, Space. Pacific Bluestone paving, Eco Outdoor.

THE PALETTE

Dulux French Limestone
(exterior)

Dulux Parchment Paper
(interiors)

Dulux Frontier Fort
(front door)





It required demolishing the eight-metre high double-brick wall that spanned the entire room. “It was a monster knocking that thing down and putting a beam up,” says Dean. It was a big move, but the fireplace brings such strong personality to the space and the porous, matte Italian terracotta tiling adds a big dose of cheerful Mediterranean chic.

It is a house with a lot of joy in every room. There’s lots to love. Dean’s favourite space is a treehouse carved into the existing attic accessed by a motorised ladder that emerges from a manhole in the ceiling. “It’s unreal! It’s like a 1970s Pink Floyd den. We’ve got four guitars and a sound system, and it’s like the music room and the sports room,” he says.

Olga’s favourite feature, however, is one of pure opulence – a strategically planned and perfectly executed

walk-in wardrobe. It is styled beautifully with her impressive collection of handbags and shoes. “Most people see it and are like, ‘Really!?’ and I say, ‘Oh come on – I work in fashion!’”

The question visitors ask Olga most, though, is about her colour choices upstairs and in the main bedroom. The palette conveys peace. “I can’t believe how much everyone loves it. It’s Dulux Parchment Paper in the bedroom and Parchment Paper Half in the hall,” she says.

The whole project is a fantastic example of their beautiful combined energy and design partnership. Dean sees it clearly. “I kind of like to push it a bit. She’s calmer. And I think we work together really well.” Which is lucky – they’ve got itchy feet already and they’re on the hunt for their next project. ▶

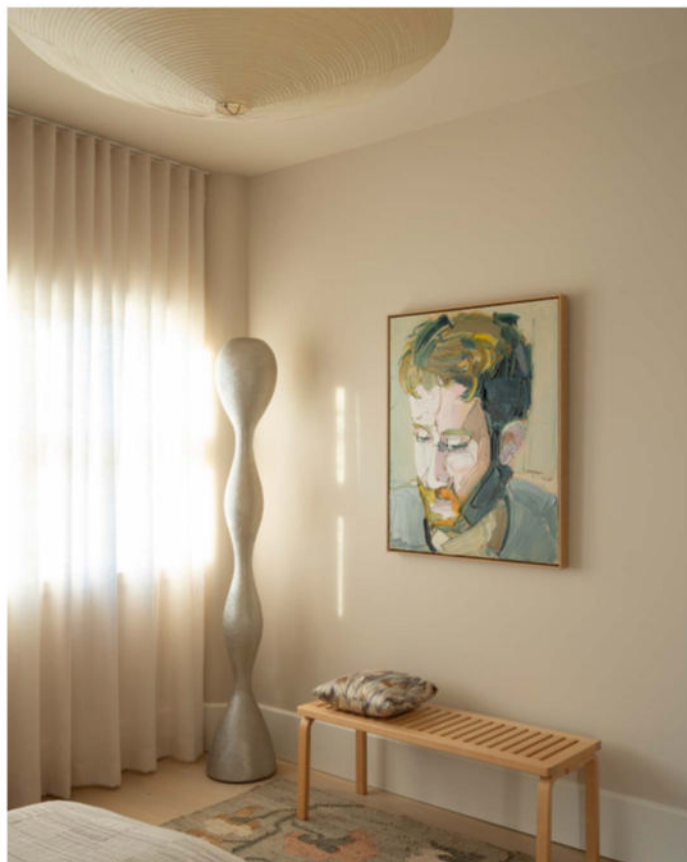
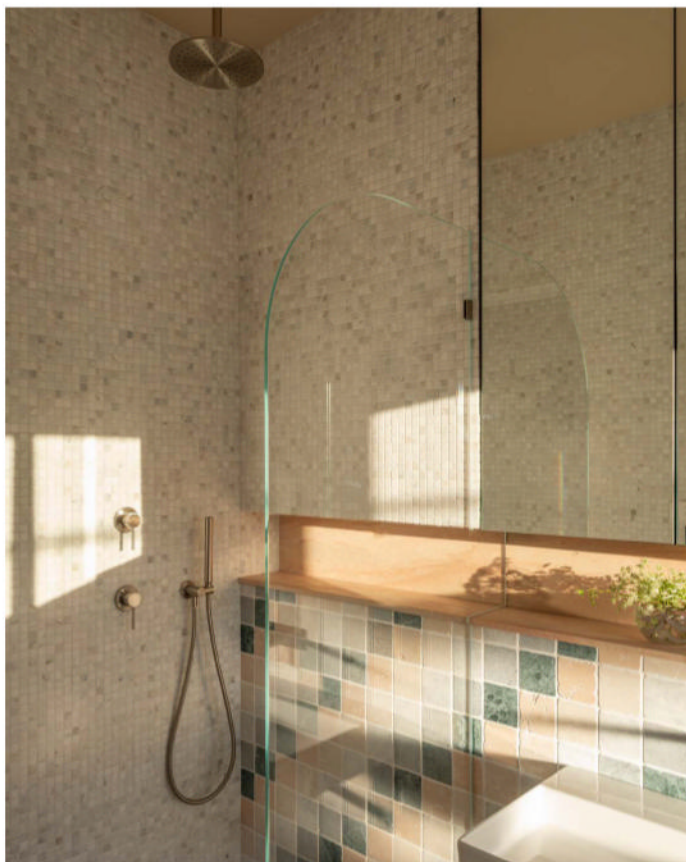
Studio Zdjellar: @studio_zdjellar.

CHILDREN’S BEDROOM Walls painted Dulux French Limestone. Pendant light, Living Edge. Joinery painted Dulux Natural White. Rattan inlay, House of Bamboo. Banquette seat in No Chintz ‘Pavilion’. Miniforms side table, Design Nation. Magis ‘Puppy’, Cult. Artwork by Olga Zdjellar. Kilim rug, Perryman Carpets. **GUEST BATHROOM** Bianco Carrara and Verde Guatemala tiles, all Bisanna Tiles. Mirror, Eastwing Studio. Wall light, Monduluce. Basin, Winnings. Artwork by Stephanie Creigh. **OFFICE** *Opposite* Joinery painted Dulux Frontier Fort. Rattan inlay, House of Bamboo. Normann Copenhagen pendant light, Luumo Design. Artwork by Nick Lepard and Mabeo lamp, Studio Alm. Vintage buffet, Rudi Rocket. Desk, Composition Studio. Armchair, 1stDibs. Rug, Robyn Cosgrove Rugs.

“I can’t believe how much everyone loves the colour. It’s Dulux Parchment Paper.”

OLGA ZDJELAR, DESIGNER & OWNER

MAIN BEDROOM *This page and opposite, top right* Walls painted Dulux Parchment Paper. Vitra ‘Akari 15a’ pendant light, Living Edge. Wall lamp in Amber, Mondoluce. Floor Lamp, Fineworks Paddington. Bench, Anibou. *Walking Life* artwork by Bernard Greaves. Rug, Planet Linen. Curtains in Warwick Fabrics ‘Whisper Nude’. Bedhead in Almond Boucle. Missoni bedcover, Winnings. **ENSUITE** *Opposite, top left and bottom right* Wall and floor tiles and Caliza Rosa travertine stone shelf, all Bisanna Tiles. Basin, Villeroy & Boch. **BATHROOM** *Opposite, bottom left* Bath surround in Caliza Rosa travertine and wall tiles in Travertino Rosso and in Rosa Perlino, all Bisanna Tiles. Basin, Villeroy & Boch.





LIVING Artworks by George Raftopoulos and Alina Trifan. Ligne Roset 'Togo' sofa, Domo. Fogia side table, Fred International. Side table and 'Rocket' stool, Anibou. Vintage Thonet stool. Curtains in Warwick Fabrics 'Whisper Eucalyptus'. Rug, Armadillo.

GARDEN BeefEater barbecue, Winnings. Coffee table, GlobeWest. Serralunga 'Cero' stools in Antracite di Sardegna, Space. Pacific Bluestone paving, Eco Outdoor.



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THE SOURCE

Vintage and contemporary in complementary shades coexist happily and add character to a home.



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1 Nelson 'Saucer Bubble' **pendant light**, \$930, Living Edge. 2 'Dora' **mirror**, \$850, Rachel Donath. 3 *Down the Road* **artwork** by Cecilia Gunnarsson, \$2100, Michael Reid Northern Beaches. 4 Savonarola **chair**, \$2400, The Vault Sydney. 5 'Nimoy' **side table**, \$199, Domayne. 6 'Agra' **rug** in Sienna, from \$5300, Armadillo. 7 'Salento' **kitchen handle** in Worn Gold, \$11.91, kaboodle. 8 BeefEater '1600' four-burner **barbecue** and side burner in Stainless Steel, \$1999, Harvey Norman. 9 Missoni 'Capri' **outdoor cushion**, \$540, Winnings. 10 Ligne Roset 'Togo' **sofa** in Anthracite, \$9495, Domo. **H&G**





PEACE *mission*

This home went from a random blend of dated renovations to an architectural haven with a shaded courtyard and ample light.

STORY *Chris Pearson* | STYLING *Chloe McCarthy* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Tom Ferguson*

MAIN BEDROOM View from the upstairs bay window. Vase, owners' existing. **FACADE** Existing masonry painted Dulux Powered Rock. Timber trims painted Dulux Natural White. Metal work painted Dulux Colorbond Basalt.

DINING Banquette in American oak, Concept Kitchens & Joinery. Table, Joel Elliott Furniture. Thonet dining chairs, and Artek armchair and stool, all Anibou. Pendant lights, Hay. Floor lamp, owners' existing. Artworks by Mitchell Cheesman, Curatorial+Co, Bruce Rowe and Epi.to.me. Windows and doors, Nicco Timber Windows & Doors. Prestige Oak timber flooring, Austral Flooring.

KITCHEN Joinery in Dulux Natural White, Concept Kitchens & Joinery. Benchtop in Corian Antarctica. Splashback tiles, Academy Tiles. Appliances, Winnings. Artworks by Joachim Lambrechts, Morgan Stokes, Suvira McDonald and The DEA Store.





For Tess and Remi, the owners of this home in Sydney's east, their indoor-outdoor space is an idyllic retreat. Serene, cocooning and intimate, their home is enveloped in lush greenery and soaked in sunlight. But, with its layers of history, it wasn't always so peaceful.

When the couple bought the Victorian freestanding home in 2020, they were smitten by its stately two-storey facade, with its bay windows and parapets, together with its generous backyard - the latter highly prized in the area.

But beyond the front door, random renovations had yielded less alluring results. Some period trappings remained - such as carved arches, skirting boards and pressed-tin ceilings, although arguably not original features. But a 90s Neo-colonial extension, with dark red timbers and terracotta floor tiles, left the open-plan living areas sombre and uninviting. Most jarringly, they looked directly onto steps leading up to an elevated, detached backyard.

"You didn't feel you were enjoying the garden, but living in a dark space below it," says Tess.

Drawn by the architecture practice's take on Mid-century modern design, the couple immediately called on architects Catherine Downie and Daniel North of Downie North. "Their work felt welcoming, homely and warm," says Remi.

The renovation design brief called for a brand-new addition, immersed in natural light, where house and garden melded into one, with kitchen and courtyard seamlessly linked.

"We wanted a kitchen that would become the heart of the home, a place the whole family would want to spend time in," says Tess. "We especially loved the idea of a comfortable and convivial cafe-style booth that wrapped around the kitchen table and stretched out into the garden."





KITCHEN Walls painted Porter's Paints Wood Smoke and Jordan Peach Light. Joinery in Dulux Natural White, Concept Kitchens & Joinery. Benchtop in Corian Antarctica. Splashback tiles, Academy Tiles. Wall light, Tovo. **BEDROOM** Walls painted Taubmans Martini. Joinery in Dulux Natural White. Knoll chair and Oluce lamp, both Living Edge. Carpet, Bremworth. **LIVING** Pendant light, Secto Design. Sofa and table, Jordan. PK22 chairs, Cult. Ottoman, Domo. Artworks by Thierry Noir and Deborah Moss. **BATHROOM** *Opposite* Wall tiles, Academy Tiles. Tapware, Astra Walker. Bath, Artwork by Morgan Stokes. Floor tiles, Fibonacci.

“Tess and Remi wanted something that felt like the coast, but also drew on their lives overseas, by including their Mid-century furniture and art collection,” adds Daniel. “With natural hues throughout, it had to feel like home, but also playful.” And a fourth bedroom would host a ready stream of visitors, to supplement the existing bedrooms for them and their two children, Chilli, nine, and Buzz, five.

First, the architects burrowed into the hillside. “We reflected back on how its first occupants would have dwelt on and within the site,” says Catherine.

“We carved out a spot in the sand dune, siting the courtyard to the north-east, nestled into the slope and shaded by the established palms.”

Then they replaced the clumsy addition with a crisp, modern extension with expansive glazing, etched in creamy white brick and set at an angle to capture the northern light. The scalloped facade references the front’s bay windows, while the pixelated sand-hued brick alludes to the area’s coastal cliffs.

“Tall and rising to the sun, it follows the proportions of the existing building, while opening to the garden,” says Daniel. “It’s light and sculptural, with curves and textural brickwork that evokes the coast.”

From the rear patio, landscape architect Emily Simpson terraced and planted the backyard up to the pool, and the main ►



bedroom - moved to the back of the house - is primely positioned to enjoy the lavish greenery.

Echoing the brickwork, copious curves appear in structural and joinery elements, including the kitchen island, banquette seating indoors and out, and the archways. "The curves are dynamic in form and create a sense of movement, while being welcoming and enveloping," says Catherine.

While the neutral hues provide a warm backdrop for the couple's furniture and art, pops of playful pink appear in the hallway and the powder room, the latter in a more saturated shade.

"When we visit, we are amazed at how at home the family is there. It's totally

theirs," says Daniel. "It's a great feeling to have created that for somebody." And the family would readily agree.

"The kitchen is our happy place," says Tess. "And the new main bedroom overlooking the garden, full of gorgeous soft light and the most incredible restful feeling, is also a favourite spot.

"The first night we spent in our new home, we simply couldn't believe how Catherine and Daniel had turned our old, creaking house into something so serene and modern." ►

Downie North: downienorth.com.

Nettle Construction: nettleconstruction.com.au.

Emily Simpson Landscape Architecture: emilysimpsonlandscape.com.au.



CHILD'S BEDROOM Toy box, Anibou. Lamp, Hay. Bed linen, In The Sac. **EXTERIOR** Bowral Bricks 'Chillingham White' bricks, Brickworks. Windows and doors, Nicco Timber Windows & Doors. Stool, Anibou. Crazy paving, Gosford Quarries. Landscape design, Emily Simpson Landscape Architecture. **POWDER ROOM** Walls painted Porter's Paints Jordan Peach. Sink, Kohler. Corian Antarctica benchtop. Tapware, Astra Walker. **MAIN BEDROOM** *Opposite* Wallpaper, Gucci. Joinery in Dulux Natural White, Concept Kitchens & Joinery. PK22 chair, Cult. Lamp, Lumina. Bedcover, In The Sac. Carpet, Bremworth.

THE PALETTE

Dulux Natural White
(joinery)

Porter's Paints Jordan Peach
(powder room/hallway)

Dulux Colorbond Basalt
(exterior metalwork)

COURTYARD Bowral Bricks 'Chillingham White' bricks, Brickworks. Windows and doors, Nicco Timber Windows & Doors. Sandstone crazy paving, Gosford Quarries. Landscape design, Emily Simpson Landscape Architecture.

THIS IS THE LIFE

For Remi and Tess, the new addition and its seamless connection to the garden is where family life is centred. "The design has transformed the rear of our home from cold and dark, to the heart, where we gravitate for much more than family meals," says Tess. "It's the focus for lively gatherings, work, homework sessions, impromptu dance parties – and occasional naps."



1

THE SOURCE

A playful mix of warm colours and Mid-century modern style creates an embracing scheme.



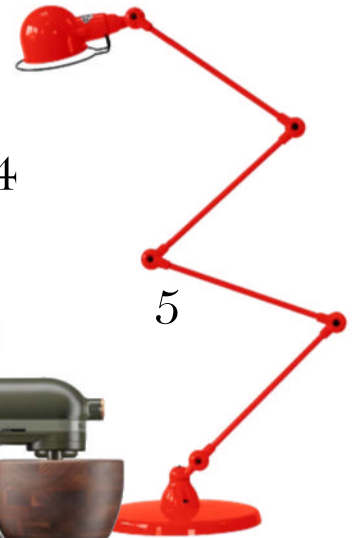
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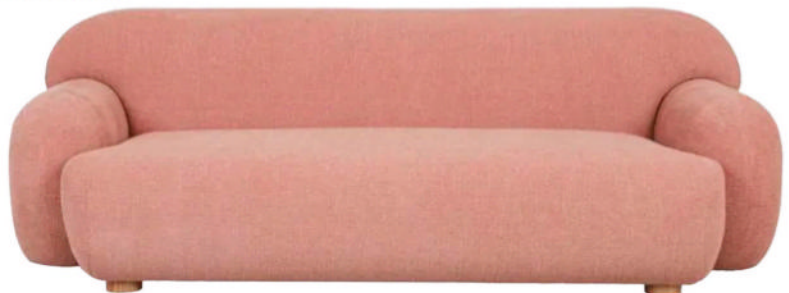
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1 'Bonbon' lamp, \$2350/large, Hay. 2 Knoll 'Cesca' chair, POA, DeDeCe. 3 'Remi' tufted rug in Capri, \$1899, Sage x Clare. 4 'Federacion' bar stool, \$349, Freedom. 5 Jieldé 'Signal' SL433 floor lamp in Red, \$969, Finnish Design Shop. 6 'Padria' round mirror in Brass, \$2125, Gramercy Home. 7 KitchenAid mixer in Evergreen, \$1149, Harvey Norman. 8 'Drum' round dining table, from \$5749, Raw Sunshine Coast. 9 Rogerseller 'Tonic' sink mixer with pull-out spray in Brushed Nickel, \$695, Winnings. 10 'Sidney Plump' three-seater sofa in Blush Pink, \$6225, GlobeWest. **H&G**

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Gardens

HARDY NATIVE PLANTS THAT THRIVE BY THE SEA

Robust plantings of mat rush (*Lomandra fluviatilis* 'Shara'), coast tea tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum*), coastal rosemary (*Westringia fruticosa*) and kangaroo grass (*Themeda triandra* 'Mingo') on the NSW Central Coast in a garden designed by Adam Eurell of Nature's Vision Landscapes.

A photograph of a garden featuring a stone wall, manicured bushes, and a paved path. The wall is constructed from stacked stones and wire mesh. The bushes are rounded and green. The path is light-colored and paved. The background is filled with dense green foliage and trees.

Coastal CLIFFHANGER

Bold hardscaping and durable native plants have turned a NSW Central Coast headland into a blissful bushland hideaway.

STORY *Chris Pearson* | PHOTOGRAPHY *Nick Watt*

With sweeping views over native bushland and out to the Pacific, this spectacular site on a NSW Central Coast headland is sparkling and tranquil one day, wild and windswept the next. And that intimate connection to nature's rhythms proved both a plus and minus for its garden designer, Adam Eurell of Nature's Vision Landscapes.

The owners bought the property in 1996. "We loved its closeness to the beach, the bush setting beside a reserve, the jaw-dropping views and the constant sound of the surf," says the owner. But occupied by a derelict home and untamed undergrowth, it required imagination to realise its potential.

Their plan was to build a home that would evolve into a weekender when the couple eventually returned to Sydney. But with the pressures of their professional lives and the arrival of two children, the site sat idle. "We thought about selling it, but we knew we would never be able to buy such an exceptional block again," says the owner. In 2018, its time arrived. They enlisted local architect Dianna Thomas to design their long-anticipated weekender and she, in turn, referred them to Adam. The overriding brief for both was for the home to blend into the landscape.

"They wanted to create a sophisticated garden that connects with the bushland setting and ocean escarpment," says Adam. "The garden had to showcase the natural beauty of the site and add to it, not detract or contrast."

On such a sloping site, it had to include a series of levels, both open and secluded, to connect seamlessly with the home and bask in the panoramic views. And the garden had a further task. "The architecture was impacted by the fire-risk rating, with limited construction materials and no timber, so we needed the garden to do some aesthetic heavy lifting," says the owner.

This site presented other headaches for Adam, such as salt-laden winds, sandy soils that would limit the plantings and the logistics of accessing the site by crane. Not to mention the wild lantana, cassia and "solid mat" of undergrowth, which would require removal by hand.

He created a series of spaces in a C-shape, with the home on the inner and the escarpment and cliff on the outer. Not surprisingly, considering the brief, the plant palette is almost

entirely native and includes banksias (*Banksia integrifolia/serrata/ericifolia*), coast tea tree (*Leptospermum laevigatum*), turpentine (*Syncarpia glomulifera*), coastal rosemary (*Westringia fruticosa*), burrawang (*Macrozamia communis*), mat rush (*Lomandra longifolia*), grey spider flower (*Grevillea buxifolia*) and flannel flower (*Actinotus helianthi*). "While the planting palette is restrained, the hardscaping brings boldness and strong lines," says Adam. "The entire garden works on easing you through the landscape to arrive at a final destination at the top of the site, the final reveal, allowing full immersion in nature."

At the front, a handsome Corten-steel gate in an off-form concrete wall interrupts a striking Corten-steel fence of vertical pickets randomly arranged in a curve. "I drew inspiration from a timber stake fence previously used to shut out bush turkeys," says Adam. A sandstone flagging driveway winds up to a parking area defined by a mighty gabion retaining wall. From there, a marine-grade steel floating staircase, etched in steel and concrete and leading to the front door, hovers above the garden and passes through a canopy of soapbrush wattle (*Acacia holosericea*), underplanted with lomandra and dianella grasses.

Past the entry, the garden opens to a mid-level lawn. This area is surrounded by native flax, lime flowering kangaroo paw (*Anigozanthos flavidus* 'Landscape Lime'), acacias and coastal tea tree. Then a boulder staircase flows up to a pausing point for soaking up the views, in brown granite aggregate.

Hardy plants, perfect for a windswept clifftop, include coastal rosemary, mat rush, heath myrtle (*Baeckea imbricata*), red spider flower, flannel flower, coast tea tree and hoary guinea flower (*Hibbertia obtusifolia*).

Wide steps of Corten steel with sandstone flagging connect with the home's verandah and entertaining area. Further steps lead to the ultimate destination, a clifftop fire pit.

The grassed area, offering blissful shade, is the owner's favourite hideaway. "That enclosed space on such a steep site makes me feel grounded and gives me a sense of calm," she says. By contrast, her whimsical "forest" of Corten-steel fence posts makes her smile. "When you walk past that and down to the beach, you feel you are going on an adventure!"

H&G

Nature's Vision Landscapes: naturesvision.com.au.

Dianna Thomas Architect: diannathomasarchitect.com.

With its sandstone flagging sourced from a local quarry and handsome gabion wall system from Maccaferri, the home's parking area creates a strong sense of arrival. Plants, both structured and loosely flowing, include trimmed Aussie box (*Westringia fruticosa* 'Aussie Box'), creeping boobialla (*Myoporum parvifolium*) groundcover, native flax (*Dianella caerulea* 'Little Jess') and saw banksia (*Banksia serrata*) trees.

PLANT LIST

TREES

Saw banksia
(*Banksia serrata*)

GRASSES

Kangaroo grass
(*Themeda triandra*
'Mingo')

FEATURE PLANTS

Native cycad
(*Macrozamia communis*)

Tall kangaroo paw
(*Anigozanthos flavidus*)

GROUNDCOVERS

Banksia (*Banksia*
integrifolia
'Roller Coaster')

SHRUBS

Coastal rosemary
(*Westringia fruticosa*)

Grey spider flower
(*Grevillea buxifolia*)

SUCCULENTS

Pig's ear
(*Cotyledon macrantha*)

"THE GARDEN HAD TO SHOWCASE
THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF THE SITE."

Adam Eurell, garden designer

A striking staircase 'floats' above strap wattle (*Acacia holosericea*), lomandra (*Lomandra longifolia* 'Tanika'), native flax (*Dianella caerulea* 'Little Jess') and round-leafed navel-wort (*Cotyledon macrantha*). **OPPOSITE** *Top left* An aerial view of the idyllic site. *Top right* Boulders from a local quarry create texture among burrawang (*Macrozamia communis*) and native flax (*Dianella caerulea* 'Little Jess'). *Bottom right* The firepit area offers spectacular views. Heath myrtle (*Baeckea imbricata*), native flax (*Dianella caerulea* 'Little Jess') and grey spider flower (*Grevillea buxifolia*). Firedrum, Hibernia. *Bottom left* Coastal rosemary (*Westringia fruticosa*), Banksia (*Banksia integrifolia* 'Roller Coaster') and native flax (*Dianella caerulea* 'Little Jess').





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Tan Arlidge

Her striking sculptures have cemented her reputation as a notable presence in the Australian and international art scenes.

PHOTOGRAPHY *Kristina Šoljo*

A fascination with materiality defines Tan Arlidge's sculptural practice. She describes her work as "moments in time captured as sculpture".

“With every evolution and new series, I need to dig deep and find the confidence to share my story.”

My family home had a significant impact on my career in the design industry.

Growing up, I remember spending a lot of time watching Dad drawing floorplans and making 3D models for projects he was working on as a builder. He had a home office and so it was a constant in my upbringing to be surrounded by his drawings and scale-models. My mum is an artist and also had a home studio, so I really was immersed in creativity from such a young age.

On a regular day, I drop my boys off at school at 8:30am. I'll get my morning takeaway coffee before heading to the studio for 9am. I tend to spend the first half hour wandering around and getting settled in with my materials and my diary before I really get into the swing of things for the day ahead. I am always simultaneously working on commission projects while developing new work, so it's a balance of past, present and future ideas.

I enjoy listening to either a podcast or music while I work in the studio. I've been listening to a podcast called *Hidden Brain* by Shankar Vedantam. He has such a calming voice and the topics he discusses are really interesting. Canadian singer Charlotte Cardin is also on repeat in the studio.

One of the biggest challenges in my career has been finding my voice as a self-taught, independent artist within the landscape of the arts in Australia. With every evolution and new series, I need to dig deep and find the confidence to share my story, in my own way.

My ultimate achievement has been developing a full-time art practice while bringing up two young, beautiful boys. I'm also very proud to have travelled overseas for installations of my work in Hong Kong, New Zealand, New York and Miami.

My thoughts and strategies on achieving a satisfying work-life balance? I feel that there is no true balance – it's about acceptance that something has got to give, and that is okay. Be kind, be humble and work hard. I'm proud to be setting a good example of hard work for my boys.

I feel most artistically challenged when I'm working with colour. I have always found this to be a huge challenge. I'm brilliant with

form and texture, but I am not naturally gifted with colour. I have developed confidence over time, but I do still rely on tools to help me understand which colour tones are complementary to one another.

Travel and spending time in nature nourish my creativity. A break from the big city gives me so much perspective and clarity. I do a lot of bush walking with family down in the NSW Southern Highlands. We are lucky enough to travel there weekly as my in-laws take care of my youngest son two days per week. It's such a beautiful place on earth.

Among the artists, architects, designers and creatives I admire are Lynda Benglis, Arlene Shechet, Richard Sweeney, Anna-Wili Highfield, Heidi Middleton and Sarah-Jane Clarke.

The last book I read and loved? I recently finished reading a book by Stephen Hawking, *Brief Answers to the Big Questions*.

My idea of true luxury is time. In such a fast-paced world, having the time to spend with family, time to focus on work projects I love, and time to enjoy some rest and relaxation is everything!

What is a unique travel destination that inspired me? During a visit to Spain, I was floored by the Dalí Theatre-Museum in Figueres and the architecture throughout the city of Barcelona. It's alive with creativity and curiosity.

There is something I would like to try as part of my work. I am dreaming of working with the Sydney Dance Company on a set design involving dancers with my sculpture – I have so many ideas for this. One, in particular, would be a grand sculptural work suspended from the ceiling acting as a centrepiece for the dancers to interact with.

I have a few favourite local spots. I live and work in Bondi Beach and I am so lucky to have a great variety of local cafes, bars and restaurants. My husband has a great cafe named The Depot, which is my go-to for coffee and breakfast, and I love Da Orazio for pasta, wine and dessert. **H&G Tan Artlidge: tanarlidge.com.**



TAN'S FAVOURITE THINGS
From top Kangaroo artwork by Anna-Wili Highfield. Brunch at The Depot cafe, Bondi Beach. Dalí Theatre-Museum, Spain. *Now Now* artwork by Arlene Shechet.



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